THE COMMONWEAL

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THE VIRTUES OF MRS. GRUNDY

IN spite of her spare severities, Mrs. Grundy periodically comes back into favor. There is no getting round the woman's virtues, which, though lacking in grace and modulation, are as essential to the life of any people desirous of avoiding illness as are the consecrated customs of open windows and sarsaparilla. The fastidious citizen may recoil in horror from indecencies to which his rawer neighbors attach themselves; but the strange fact is he does not speak—or, at least, speaks without being listened to—until Mrs. Grundy, her arms akimbo, cries out her maledictions.

It is now some years since Governor Smith, speaking to an assemblage of theatrical people in New York City, declared that unless the gentlemen who control the stage assumed the burden of cleaning house, there would be no stopping a popular interdict. Scarcely a day has gone by since then without its protest from the pulpit or the rostrum against the barbarisms of Broadway. And what has been achieved? For every person who, like Mr. Channing Pollock or Mr. Marc Connolly, has stood for a respectable effort to be respectable, there have been two or three to cringe behind the prosperity of their façades. It is a situation which, quite apart from the permanently important question of public morals, involves the no less fundamental concept of art.

It is, of course, impossible for a community—even a very large one like New York—to regulate a matter so vast in its implications. The theatre audiences are only partly of local origin. Night after night, entertainment is sought after by the congested throngs of visitors who explore the wide horizons of Manhattan. And among these throngs are tourists and salesmen, collegians and yokels, who believe in the theory that cities are normally red. Inquisitive Johnnies and Betsies, from regions where the scenery is usually a polychrome of sign-boards and ragweed, complicate, if they do not create, the moral problem of the theatre. These and their numberless brethren in the industrialized city are the most persistent mental moles in existence. They know what they want and can pay for it. Nor should it be forgotten that plenty of encouragement is offered them. The shrewdest among them realize very well that scattered through the audience are leaders of the state and society, even furtively venturesome clergymen. Excepting the aforementioned Mrs. Grundy, who in these days proudly asserts unfamiliarity with pornography?

That is why improvement is so difficult. You cannot centralize the agencies which shall cope with the disorder. Because everybody is agreed that murder is a relatively noxious affair, the police can battle efficiently

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to curb its commission. But as things now stand no organized group could attempt to suppress vicious tendencies in the theatre without exposing itself to contempt and ridicule. Censorship is crushed by the onrush of counter-censorship. Time was when good men believed, with G. K. Chesterton, that a jury of average citizens could pass a trustworthy verdict upon a doubtful play. We have since seen the idea in practice; and the only thing that can be said for it is that our play-juries agreed about everything excepting the drama. Indeed, the jury scheme could work out only if there were a detailed code of legislation to cover possible offenses against morals. To expect twelve men to agree upon metaphysical principles, or standards of ethics, is to suppose that all of them will hold the same philosophy of life and art. And they simply will not.

But can we arrive at any such code? The difficulties involved are more easily estimated if we associate, as did Father Gillis in his recent address to the New York City Holy Name Society, the other literary arts with the theatre. Marketing books is dependent to some extent upon the ruling of the federal post-office authorities. Literature which is considered indecent can be barred from the mails; in certain flagrant instances it can be suppressed, while fines are imposed upon the responsible parties. But anybody who examines into the decorative scheme of the corner kiosk will see in less than a minute how little this moral vigilance accomplishes. We have talked a great deal about the disreputable character of modern French letters; but it is to be doubted whether one could find in the heart of Paris an assemblage of scurrilous newsprint to compare with the stuff offered for sale in a city otherwise so commendable as Kokomo. Our whole sanitary system is futile. It reposes upon the fallacy that the people are sovereign, good, and competent to deal with complex problems via a democratic intuition. The "people" are no such thing. They are precisely what their institutions make them. And the press is an institution. The theatre is an institution.

It follows that an effort to give these institutions a positive content, to render them ethically and artistically worthy of the community which they serve, is the most promising road toward betterment of present conditions. The endeavor to advertise good plays and good books, to attach the approval of church and society to excellent work commendably done, is more and more necessary. Unfortunately, it is the last thing considered by many who hurl a continuous invective against erring authors and peccant playwrights. For every three dozen times that they direct attention to evil, there is only one reference to good. If we paid more attention to the kind of work being done for the theatre in France by such men as Jacques Copeau and Henri Ghéon, or in Germany by the Bühnenvolksbund, we might encourage somebody in this country to emulate them. Indeed, one sometimes feels that our more austere critics cannot possibly find time to read a good book or to catch a glimpse of unsmudged drama. And because this negative, denunciatory principle prevails, such highly promising movements as the little theatre have failed to get the support which might have made them great. This little theatre has succeeded neither in breaking the bonds of theatrical commercialism nor in making an artistic and ethical improvement; and perhaps the reason is that none of the churches, either Catholic or Protestant, gave a whoop about it. We have seen, for instance, college theatricals of such beauty and promise that we recalled how largely the Shakespearean troupes had been recruited from similar circles; but we know also that the end of them all was nothing, was mere surrender of opportunity, was only the usual submergence under wholesale denunciation of drama.

Nevertheless, this denunciation is necessary and ought to bear fruit. As lovers of the arts we sincerely hope that it will be heeded before the proprieties of Mrs. Grundy, beckoning to a public which is alarmed at the conduct of its children and the myriad manifestations of crime, manage to do what they have accomplished many times before. We remember that theatres have been closed by law; that the production of books has been rigorously and injudiciously curtailed; and that, clamped in the grip of censorship, sincere expression has been made impossible. We feel there should be something like an accepted literary ethical code. It is, after all, not difficult to determine, in fixed statutory language, what are obscenity, profaneness, and scurrilous vulgarity. But in dealing with these it would probably be best to remember from what loins they spring—loins that are simple cupidity and solid cash. A theatrical producer or publisher who used them to pad his bank-account ought not to be haled into the limelight and given reams of invaluable publicity. He ought merely to be taxed heavily—not fined—for serving wares quite similar in character to antique intoxicants. And we wager that the result of an efficient, silently automatic tax-schedule would rival everything which has been claimed for Sapolio.

No trade known to man has, on the whole, worked so hard, earnestly and conscientiously as the literary trade. Our whole historic literature is a monument to its humanity. Looking back upon what has been done by his forefathers, the average writer of our time, when the talent given him is genuine, is not interested in debasing his craft. But whatever may be his personal virtues and ideals, he lives by the spirit of his time and furnishes the product in which his contemporaries are interested. And one of the disasters of the present hour is that the young writing man, placed between Mrs. Grundy and the Marquis de Sade—between the devil and the cobalt sea—is minus a human constituency. He may well call out to the public: "Give me an ounce of civet, sweet apothecary, to sweeten my imagination."

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

THE ratification of the Italian debt settlement by the Senate opens the way for further definite negotiations, especially with France. It seems to us that the accord with Count Volpi was unquestionably desirable and advantageous. No man in touch with currency problems would argue for an adjustment which ignored utterly the history of money and credit since the war. The position assumed by Senator Reed, attacking the settlement, was, in fact, remote from finance. He argued very simply that we were making a cadeau to that worst of conceivable monsters, Signor Mussolini. This he strove with manly democratic rhetoric to prevent, urging the case for Russia meanwhile. The underlying grotesquerie of this argument seems to have escaped general notice. Government, as Lenin and Mussolini see it, is precisely the same thing—strong, autocratic government placed in the hands of a few who seek to enforce a definite program. We may love neither, but we cannot argue that one is democratic and amorous of the plain people. The abiding difference between them is one which seems to have escaped Senator Reed completely. Italy is a nation, interested in its own welfare through the development of its tradition, and at least relatively aware that commerce reposes on credit; Russia is an "international," devoted to the domestic and foreign exploitation of an idea. With the first we might possibly have to wage war, but it would not be civil war. It is a nation side by side with which we can live normally. Whether or not we could also shake hands with Russia is another question, which obviously has no relation to whether or not we should wring the Italian neck.

ALTHOUGH the diplomatic negotiations for the settlement of the Tacna-Arica dispute are progressing only very slowly, they foreshadow a new era in Latin-American international relations. It must always be remembered that the southern republics have not yet fully outgrown the colonial stage. Our own treatment of Colombia, with reference to Panama, would have been impossible on a continent more robustly organized. Boundaries and rights of all sorts remain dependent upon treaties, the interpretation and effectiveness of which is in umbrage. Tacna-Arica is a case in point; and the effort to dispose of this small territory, sandwiched between Chili and Peru, through diplomatic negotiation in which the United States figures as arbiter, is a step toward political finality. Perhaps an arbitral board of neutrals might have settled the problem more speedily, but it seems difficult to suppose that any other solutions could have been offered than those suggested by Secretary Kellogg. A plebiscite is out of the question, and indeed experience since the war seems to prove the abiding ineffectiveness of this variety of "self-determination." The real way out, apparently, is a sale of the territory to Bolivia which would thus acquire what it now needs so badly—a harbor. In fact, the President of Bolivia, in a letter addressed to the United States government, indicates that overtures toward such a sale have already been made privately by both Chile and Peru.

ONE other suggestion made by Secretary Kellogg seems of particular interest. Could the Tacna-Arica district be made an independent state or a protectorate? Well, independence is out of the question so far as a small, sparsely populated area is concerned, which as a buffer-state, would become an eternal battleground. A protectorate, on the other hand, would mean either annoying control by the United States or necessarily timid supervision by one of the larger South-American republics. But if we suppose that the nations of both countries were organized into a society analogous to the League of Nations, the idea of a protectorate might become a very practical one. The real significance of Tacna-Arica lies in the fact that it may become a test-case for many similar territorial problems. Obviously, an international American league would aid in settling these peaceably and effectively. And, as we have observed on several previous occasions, it would afford a dependable agency for the work of international influence.

COMMENTING on the calamitous situation in Mexico, the Mexican bishops have issued a noble and generous pastoral letter. Of especial significance is the passage defining the changed relations between Church and state in Mexico: "When a nation enjoys the immense advantage of being Catholic in its totality, the state, or rather the government, is under the obligation to admit and defend in practice the rights and priv-

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ileges derived from the doctrine heretofore explained. For this reason, before the loss of religious unity in Mexico was consummated, the clergy and Catholic people in Mexico were laboring in conformity with their rights when they strove by every possible peaceful means to the end that this unity might be preserved intact. But in nations where this religious unity does not exist, as in Mexico under the present circumstances, it is the sacred duty of the civil authority sincerely and fully to recognize religious liberty. So that, as it may impose no religion, neither may it proscribe any religion nor prohibit the legitimate exercise of any such religion. This is the true religious liberty recognized and practised in the United States of the north—liberty with which the Church is content wherever religious unity does not exist in fact."

THE advocates of industrial conscription in war time have been having hard sledding during the Senate debates on the Capper-Johnson bill, and the economic spectre has been raised against its proposals with great effect. One of the aspects that stands out most clearly is that, from henceforth, it will be quite impossible to limit the working of any such scheme to a certain number of industries. Modern war is waged with the entire resources of a nation. Its effect on industry is a permeative one. This was seen very clearly during the Allied occupation of the Ruhr, when the proposal to dismantle German factories concerned in the business of war preparation met the acid test of practicality. With all the will in the world to render Germany ineffective for any sort of armed aggression over an indefinite period, the various disarmament commissions found themselves faced with the alternative of leaving things very much as they had been, or destroying the industrial life of an entire nation. The dilemma has been stated very clearly by Signor Nitti in his clever, though violent, arraignment of the Treaty of Versailles, "Europe without Peace."

ONE point, very skilfully made by Dr. John A. Ryan in the course of his statement of arguments against the bill, merits more attention than it has received or is likely to receive from a press that, at its best, is not in business for idealistic purposes. Speaking of the general desire, even of groups who are far from pacifist, to find some means of taking private profit out of war, Dr. Ryan contended that, for the ends of justice to be met, the process should begin long before the declaration of war puts the power of conscription into the hands of the national executive. "Since war profits begin long in advance of war, builders of cruisers and military planes, manufacturers of munitions and contractors for army and navy supplies, now, in time of peace, should justly be required to render this service without profit." As Dr. Ryan sorrowfully admits, we are very far today from such a utopian vision, but it would be interesting to see what would happen if, after the fine feathers have been plucked from the business of war, the golden eggs should follow them into the discard. Our idea of a real, worth-while, "now-it-can-be told" book, would be a frank history of the confidential relations between the Vickers-Maxims, Creuzot-Schneiders, Krupps and Ansaldos, and the cabinets of the countries in which they amassed their swollen profits during the ten years preceding the explosion.

THE statistics furnished by the United States Department of Agriculture for the year 1925 are stark and unadorned testimonials to a national calamity about which much has been written theoretically. The year marked a decrease in the farm population of 479,000. Had it not been for the large excess of births over deaths, the total would have been much greater. Nearly a million more people migrated to cities and villages than went to settle upon farms. To some extent the Florida boom has been responsible for the depletion of rural districts in the south-eastern states, and similar movements elsewhere have undoubtedly had their effect. But the appalling decrease—three times as great as that announced for 1924—is not to be accounted for by special circumstances. The migration from the western and north-western country, for instance, is simply the result of despair on the part of farmers. Financial prosperity has been in abeyance; and the frigid unsatisfactoriness of social conditions has stripped life of the pleasures which even the shaggiest industrial communities seem to offer. It is all very well to hold forth the old charms of independence and fresh air. The abiding truth that man does not live by bread alone holds good for people in overalls as well as for those in dinner jackets. Our nation, observing the steady industrialization of its citizenry since 1922, must rouse itself to deal with the situation effectively and immediately.

RESIDENTS of and visitors to New York should confer a favor upon themselves by seeing the exposition which the New York Public Library has prepared in honor of the tercentenary of the arrival of Peter Minuit, who subsequently purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians. It is a truly festive and commemorative display, combining manuscripts and early Dutch records, contemporary maps and views, books and pamphlets, to make concrete the story of New York from 1524 to 1674. Of especial interest are a full-sized reproduction of the first map of the world, drawn by Girolamo de Verrazzano in 1512; a facsimile of the charter of 1614, granted by the states-general of the Dutch Republic and bestowing a limited monopoly of trade in "Nieu Nederlandt" for three years; and the original charter of 1621, to the Dutch West India Company. Among the important books on display are the original volume of Wassenaer's accounts of the first settlements, and a first edition of

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The New World, written by Joannes de Laet in his capacity as a member of the "inner" executive body, and published in 1625.

AN interesting reflection upon men and their ways is suggested by one document resurrected for the tercentenary. A facsimile of the purchase-contract of Manhattan from the Indians—the original of which has been lost—is present, flanked by three proofs. These, quaint and redolent of ancient customs, include an account of a hearing before Governor Lovelace and his council, on April 9, 1670. All together they establish a point of great value in the proper interpretation of early American history—the point that the Dutch settlers in Manhattan were probably the first Europeans to take possession of American soil for permanent occupation, not by mere settlement or conquest by force of arms, but through the normal medium of commercial bargaining. Our own national government has followed this Dutch precedent on numerous occasions, the most notable of which are the purchase of Louisiana and the acquisition of Alaska. It is, therefore, pleasant and profitable to note the following from the letter of P. Schagen to the states-general: "They have bought the Island of Manhates from the wild men for the value of sixty guilders; it is 11,000 morgens in extent. They sowed all their grain the middle of May, and harvested the middle of August; whereof being samples of summer grain."

MULTIPLYING attempts to solve the problems of higher education vary in both interest and importance. But few will doubt the value of blending the advantages of a small college with those of a large university. If isolated, the first almost necessarily tends to become relatively destitute and provincial; the second is normally the victim of its too widely elaborated system. Hitherto this idea of amalgamation, particularly with secular universities, has been new to Catholic collegiate education. In fact, we believe the first expression of it in practice is the new Albertus Magnus College, of New Haven, Connecticut, which is intimately affiliated with Yale University. The college has exceptional endowments of personnel and scene. Its faculty, consisting for the most part of priests and sisters of the Order of Saint Dominic, is dedicated especially to giving instruction in Thomistic philosophy. The college course has this for its nucleus, relying then upon instructors and professors in Yale University to supply teaching of the secular arts and sciences. This respect for high academic standards is to a large extent represented by the charming site occupied by the college. It was no dull eye that detected in the former mansion of Louis Stoddard a worthy cradle for a brave and worthy educational adventure. All who are interested in the development of American culture will follow with sympathetic keenness a work which, under the patronage of Albertus Magnus, may lead to a vast, courageous effort toward breaking down the insulation which has so steadily prevented Catholic thought from entering as largely as is desirable into the counsels of the nation.

SINCLAIR LEWIS, taken like a small boy edition of Bob Ingersoll, is more than relatively a disappointment. Many of us had expected that the corrosive energy advertised by the better of his successful novels would really lead to something like a made-up mind. It was hard to believe that Mr. Lewis had no other intellectual resource than environment. Noticeably, of course, he graduated toward enlightenment through contacts—Washington Square following Gopher Prairie, with the very newest emancipations close on its heels. He has absorbed them one after another, with all the serious fidelity of a shark chasing a community of many-colored minnows. But his Kansas City effusion proves that the small boy is ultimate and unchangeable in him. It happens, by the way, to be a representative and instructive small boy. The puritannical idea of God as a Being continuously challenging, denying—the Being summoned up in a kind of retroactively barbaric mood at revival camp-fires—suggests (the simplicity of the logic is characteristic) a counter challenge. I, the great Sinclair Lewis, author of books which have put all the goofs in their proper places, can go up on a mountain and give a word of advice to the stars! It is, you see, the obverse of the Mathers or the Edwardses wrestling with the mysteries of eternity. Perhaps it is, with relation to them, a reductio ad absurdum; but that does not prevent it itself from being absurd. We must believe that were there to enter the heart of Mr. Lewis a momentary, flitting philosophical understanding that God is the Divine Lover, the awefulness of his ghastly renouncement would drive him, crushed and repentant, into the solitude of silence.

GENERAL PERSHING'S remarks upon the reduplication of American war memorials in France, and his implied rebuke to a certain super-nationalism and bad taste that they seem to him to register, is what might have been looked for from a leader who has always, and under the most trying circumstances, given proof of sane and balanced judgment. Even now, eight years after the Armistice, the American chief remarks that "many of those now erected give the impression that the people who put them up have forgotten their existence." What it is likely to be in eighty or even eighteen years may be imagined. The tendency of enthusiasm to erect memorials is no more marked than the tendency of posterity to neglect them. Then what was meant for a symbol of commemoration becomes an evidence of forgetfulness, none the more pleasant to contemplate because oblivion is one of the benign processes that helps this war-torn old planet to carry on. There is something strangely alien to true

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soldierly tradition in all the mortuary fuss and bustle that ensued over the disposal of the nation's dead in France. It is noticeable that the returned fighting man seldom has a good word to say for it. To lie where he fell, under the bosom of the soil he has helped to liberate, while the plow runs or children play above his head, is probably the way the soldier would choose if it were his habit to make testamentary dispositions in the matter—which it is not. Remembrance is a shy quarry, not to be wooed by memorials whose significance a short generation outlasts. There is no monument so tall that the waters of Lethe will not rise above its head in time. For the rest:

"Did'st ever say: 'Lo! I forget?'
Such speech was to remember yet."

THE "next war" may be, as everyone fervently hopes, a matter of purely academic interest. Nevertheless, books are already being written on the subject, and records of the last one seldom fail to add some prophecy of what may be expected if all the safeguards against another explosion break down. So it is instructive to compare the very different technical conclusions reached by men who have had exactly the same opportunities to form them. Two "war books" which are reviewed elsewhere in this issue of The Commonweal, bring out this divergence rather strikingly. One of them, Captain Thomason's Fix Bayonets!, is the work of a professional soldier. The other, Toward the Flame, by Mr. Hervey Allen, is the record of his experiences, during the hardest month of fighting, by a young national guardsman of the "Keystone" or Pennsylvania division. Strangely—or perhaps not strangely—it is the professional soldier who is staunchly conservative and persuaded that nothing has changed very radically. Men tire of carrying the machine gun, Captain Thomason tells us—it slows up the advance. On the other hand, rifle and bayonet will go as far and as fast as the soldier's legs and zest for fighting will carry him. And it is "the rifle and bayonet that win battles."

MR. ALLEN'S conclusions are directly contrary. He does not attempt to conceal his contempt for what he terms the "obsolete and impossible tactics" still being taught in defiance of what he considers the war's lessons for infantry. "Oh, the precious time wasted in our elaborate, useless, murderous 'science' called 'musketry!'" exclaims Mr. Allen. "It is as much out of style as the musket from which it takes its name. Teaching it should be made a court-martial offense. . . . With machine gunners and his marvelous artillery, 'Fritz' held the world back for months and died game, magazine stories written from rearward dug-outs and Paris to the contrary notwithstanding." The traditionalism of the professional soldier and the openness to new lessons of the "amateur" make an interesting contrast. One can imagine H. G. Wells, writing us a very suggestive monograph on all the implications it opens up. Perhaps it has always been so more or less. Round about 1426, one can very well imagine an advocate of the "status quo" in belligerency writing something like this: "Powder gets damp and men get tired of carrying arquebuses. It is the bow and pike that win battles."

THE death of Joseph Pennell removes a very vivid and sincere figure from a world where color and sincerity are none too general. Of late years his voice, from long crying in the wilderness, had grown shrill, and there was a gnarled crook in the finger which he was forever shaking in the face of dullness and charlatanry. His was not the temper that makes a successful champion. By setting himself square against the current of advancing ugliness, he only succeeded in registering its force. He hated too many things, and hated them too separately and zestfully. Prohibition, canned foods, billboards, the reputation of Bernard Shaw, American art-critics—there was no knowing just at what point the irritation of Joseph Pennell, skilfully challenged, might not break forth into arabesques of abuse. So the fine old artist, who never drew a careless line, or spoke a politic word, gradually acquired the reputation of a common scold and what he had to say, though always worth listening to and pondering, the mere status of "good copy." He was the true Casca of our modern American world—"What a rude fellow is this Casca grown!" All the same, there is something that compels admiration in his resolute concern with a generation that was not going his way, and from which it would have been so easy and pleasant for the successful artist to stand aloof in a little Thebaide of creative beauty all his own. If only as the first whose draughtsmanship revealed to Americans the beauty of their soaring cities, Pennell's reputation seems secure in the country which he berated most and liked best.

A RECENT issue of The Placidian, the journal of the Washington Benedictine Foundation, contains the interesting announcement that "a highly specialized school for children of arrested mental development will be opened under the auspices of the Benedictines." The very fact that this school is to be under the immediate supervision of Dr. Thomas Verner Moore is sufficient indication of its plans and augury for its success. During recent years Dr. Moore has been doing conspicuously essential work—combining the modern science of psychology with the abiding helpfulness of pastoral care. It is typical of the Benedictine spirit that it should have taken the lead among Catholics in promoting endeavor so profound and thorough in character as psychiatric reclamation. And we might add that The Placidian, for its part, is a satisfactory expression of this same "blessed" spirit in journalism. Few other journals combine so well genuine literary form and spiritual content.

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LIGHT ON MEXICAN DARKNESS

THE social and political condition of Mexico, though relatively ignored by the general press, is a matter to which no American can be indifferent. The Calles government is our most immediate neighbor: upon what it does may depend the fate of American citizens both north and south of the Rio Grande; it will determine the economic status of a wealthy country in which we cannot avoid being commercially interested, and toward the cultural character of emigrants from which we must take a definite attitude; and it can influence to a great extent the nature of our relationships with all Latin America.

Now the history of Mexico is one thing, and the history of the United States and Mexico is another. Unless one realizes how the two have developed, in parallel but independently, one cannot understand either. Precisely because the action of the United States has time and time again changed the natural course of Mexican development, the present condition of Mexico is something in which we are not only interested but for which we are to some extent responsible. We feel, for instance, that the facts about foreign business activity have had their bearing upon revolutionary movements for social reform; and we know that the Constitution of 1917, with the religious provisions which it incorporates, was recognized by the Wilson government because—and only because—the European situation made such recognition imperative.

The religious provisions, together with the entire policy of the Calles régime toward the Catholic Church, are therefore the fated appendage to a long, intricate history of political and economic battles. To know and condemn them is one thing; to understand their origin, and thereby to arrive at an idea of how to counteract them successfully, is another. Therefore The Commonweal, basing its action upon the spirit of the encyclical of the Holy Father, has opened its columns to a free discusssion of the problem. The encyclical, while ordaining that no political action specifically Catholic be taken in Mexico, seems to suggest also that no similar action be taken by Catholics in the United States. But it emphasizes the duty to work for the civic and social well-being of the afflicted country, and it urges the formation of a strong, helpful public opinion. The articles we are printing are contributions toward this opinion. They are signed by men whom experience and study have made competent to discuss the situation. Apart from that, we do not endorse them individually. Each writer is personally responsible for his views, and comment is invited from those who disagree.

For itself, The Commonweal is concerned primarily with two facts or circumstances. The first is the truth that, despite the deluge of print which has been devoted in recent years to the Mexican débâcle, many aspects of the situation still remain totally dark. We have seen the house go up in smoke, but as yet nobody has clearly pointed out who started the fire. The second is the unfortunate absence of an organized American Catholic opinion. Mexico, as a country with a great and beautiful tradition, as a nation still fundamentally Catholic to the core, must be understood and assisted here by Catholics, if anybody is to understand and assist it. But up till now the situation has aroused only a little sporadic concern; and the great duty urged by the Holy Father still awaits the unselfish coöperative energy that shall shoulder it.

That this energy may be developed speedily, the administrative committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference has, during the past week, outlined a program of action. It summons men and women everywhere in this country to organize for the purpose of convincing the government of the United States that the rabid violations of the principle of religious liberty in Mexico are intolerable. The appeal is directed to citizens regardless of creed. And while the case for the legitimacy of official protest will be outlined in a handbook to be issued soon, the basic argument is stated clearly enough in the following pronouncement:

"The present government of Mexico won its way to power by revolution, and has been strengthened in its hold upon power by recognition by our own government of the United States. Before such recognition was granted in 1915, our Secretary of State, Mr. Lansing, at the direction of the United States Senate, interrogated the then provisional government of Mexico as to whether or not that government would guarantee and provide religious liberty for its people. The Mexican government solemnly pledged itself to guarantee religious liberty according to the Constitution of 1857. On that promise, our government granted recognition. No sooner was it won than the government of Mexico scrapped the Constitution of 1857; declared a pre-constitutional "period"; and by military dictatorship forced, not through popular vote but through picked convention, the Constitution of 1917.

"We are amply justified, and not only justified but, as is every American, obligated, to call upon our government therefore that its original request upon which recognition to Mexico was granted, be lived up to by the government of Mexico. The United States gave recognition to Mexico on Mexico's specific promise that it would guarantee religious liberty to all its citizens. Mexico has not kept this agreement, but on the contrary, her government has entered upon a definite campaign of force to destroy religious liberty and is intensifying the campaign by striking at the roots of religion—religious education."

These premises and the conclusion which follow from them are sufficiently clear. The thing remaining to be done is, as we have said, the formation of a public mind sufficiently instructed about the details of the problems and adequately aroused to action. And though that be difficult, it is not impossible.

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EVOLUTION RESTATED

WE have long since grown accustomed to reading, especially in popular statements and small manuals, that the descent of man from an animal ancestry is one of those things about which no manner of doubt can be entertained. The rapid-fire authors are content to leave us without the slightest suggestion that the proof for their assertions is still very fragmentary.

It is a pleasure, therefore, to read so temperate a statement of the real position of scientific opinion as that recently issued by the council of the American Anthropological Association and published in the columns of our contemporary, Science. It is issued "in view of the dogmatic objections raised against the theory of evolution," and commences with the statement that geology shows that plants and animals known in early ages by their fossil remains prove that the forms "have not remained the same for any length of time."

As a general theory that change is the rule, this may at once be accepted. But it should be borne in mind that there are exceptions. The brachiopods or lamp shells—creatures with bivalve shells, such as clams, which are not, however, brachiopods, possess—have been known from very early times, and of these several have come down to us unchanged from the era of the Cambrian Sea—a remote epoch in geological time. The Ordovician period is not much nearer to us, and yet, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica tells us, most of the invertebrate classes were represented at that early epoch by "forms which do not differ from their existing representatives in any important respect."

Still, as a general statement the first part of the memorandum may be accepted with reasonable assurance. Attention is then called to the fact, which needs no labored proof, that man can and has changed the forms of domestic animals and of plants in a marked manner. From this it is argued that in the course of long ages nature will "produce more fundamental changes." Of course that was one of Darwin's great arguments; and in connection with it there are two important points which are often left out of consideration. First, alterations in domestic fauna and flora are created by the mind of man, in accordance with a will which desires them. That introduces into the question the important principle of design. If design is obvious in the case of humanly ordered changes, the action of nature is inexplicable without the hypothesis of some kind of design. Then, in the second place, there is the further fact that these man-caused changes are only stable so long as man keeps his hand upon them.

The domestic dog, for example, seems to have been derived on the one hand from the wolf, and on the other, from the jackal. That is, at least, our surmise. From whatever material, man has succeeded in producing forms so far unlike as the Pekinese and the St. Bernard, yet all are dogs and all are of the species known as canis domesticus. But these varieties are only preserved as such by careful segregation, for if care is not taken the breed at once degenerates, and mongrels are the result.

From this point the question of man is taken up, and the statement proceeds: "Man is part of the animal world. In all respects his anatomical structure conforms to that of the rest of the animal world. His prenatal life closely parallels that of the higher mammals. The same influences that control their development after birth, control him, and he responds in a like manner to the environment in which he is placed. Prehistoric archaeology has shown that in the course of the ages, man has undergone great changes in physical type, and that ancient man differed from modern races—the more so, the more ancient the races."

That again is a statement that may be accepted in a broad sense. The only criticism to be made is that man, "nature's insurgent child," as he has been called, is constantly interfering with what we imagine to be the processes of nature, and more especially with "natural selection," so far as that may be taken as a process of nature. Where that agency would say to the feeble and unfit, "you must die," man, under the influence of Christianity at any rate, retorts, "you shall live," and uses every fragment of medical science to carry out his purpose.

Further, it should be added that with the exception of some much debated fragments of which we cannot speak here, man has always, from the earliest days of which we know anything, been man, and clearly recognizable as such. The Neanderthal race which recent discoveries have shown to have been much more widely distributed than was once imagined, whether it became extinguished by other races or otherwise, was not only physically man and nothing else, but had the hands of a skilful craftsman. Moreover, as his interments amply demonstrate, this man had a firm belief in an after life.

When we get beyond the first race we come to skeletal remains, so little differing from those of the man of today as to lead us to suppose that if he were to reappear dressed as we are, his appearance would not cause any great surprise. There are today, living in the Dordogne in France, men whose crania so closely resemble those of the inhabitants of the prehistoric burial places in that same spot, as to lead to the suggestion that they are their lineal descendants. Hence the emphasis on the changes in man's form is perhaps a little stressed. The statement sums up the matter:

"Local types of man have developed on every continent, and their existence proves that changes in the heritable characteristics of racial groups are effected in the course of time. We must conclude that the bodily form of man as well as that of animals and plants has changed, and is still changing; not in the course of centuries, but in long periods."

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MEXICO'S FLAGRANT FOLLIES

By R. A. McGOWAN

THE Mexican persecution of religion presents an interesting study in stupidity which deserves more than a passing thought. Mexico's economic program is fundamental to Mexican politics and development. A few years ago, in reaction from the bitter days of Diaz, that program had followed methods which Catholics in Mexico rejected. The Church stood in the way of those methods and, however unjust such a persecution would then have been, it would not have been stupid from the point of view of the land and labor revolutionists.

But since then the program has definitely changed, partly in its aims and almost entirely in its methods. Just prior to the persecution, this fact was clearly seen. The land and labor programs of Mexico had sloughed off most of the tags of Socialism that had earlier clung about them. Violence and confiscation were giving way to peaceful methods and compensation. A situation had been reached which called for the early coöperation of the Church with the land and labor aims and organizations of the country. This was a matter of tremendous importance in a land where the vast majority of the people are Catholics. Under these circumstances, the logical step was for the government to make a bid for friendship by repealing the anti-religious provisions of the constitution, or at least by continuing to forget their existence. Instead, it chose that moment to launch a bitter persecution. At that very moment, too, the Mexican government was in the act of dealing with a crucially important question which at home demanded a united front and, in the United States, friends, or at least not more enemies.

Mexico's greatest foreign problem is that of American ownership of so much of her land and capital and the constant, unending effect of this upon the attitude of the American government and American public opinion. A wealthy but undeveloped and weak country lies alongside of a strong and aggressive country. One is inhabited by simple, illiterate Indians and by educated whites, mestizos, and Indians whose talents and enthusiasms have not run to the development of the country's wealth or the amassing of personal fortunes. The other abounds both in keen business men and in money for foreign investment. The results are as we know them. Hanging over all things Mexican is their fear of American business men and the American government.

Yet at the moment when the curbing of the power of American business men was at stake and when negotiations were on between the two governments, the Mexican government proceeded to launch an attack upon the Church to which the vast majority of its people belong and the Church of some twenty million Americans. For sheer ineptness, it is hard to find its parallel.

The persecution is an insult to Mexican Catholics who, possibly more than any other group of Mexican citizens, fear the encroachment of the United States. Among the exports which we try to sell Mexico are certain Protestant creeds, a proselytizing Y. M. C. A., and a pagan influence in literature and customs. Mexican Catholics have all the normal Mexican fear that their country will be gobbled up by the United States. But added to this is their further fear of American Protestant influence, American irreligious influence, and American pagan influence. They hoped, therefore, that the Mexican government would succeed in its oil controversies with the United States, and thus not only ward off the danger of present intervention but pave the way for that economic independence which will help Mexico to save herself from political and cultural subjection. It is a tribute to the saneness of Catholic Mexicans that persecution at home did not blind them to the danger of American commercial and political control. They saw themselves between two fires—the fire of domestic persecution and the fire of American control. They opposed and fought the persecution, as they still fight it, but they have given no aid or comfort to the enemies of their country. Yet consider the stupidity of a government that would subject them to such a strain at a time when they should be free from all distrust.

We in the United States can measure the stupidity of the Mexican government in jeopardizing, at this juncture, the friendship of Catholics here. Catholics are Americans and, however much our government has walked in the paths of imperialism, it cannot yet be said that the rank and file of the American people are imperialistic. Catholics, above all, are not imperialists, for the family traditions of most of us give us bitter knowledge of what foreign domination means, and there is something so arrogant and cruel in the imperialistic spirit that the Catholic mind and soul rebel against it. The Mexican government should have found friends among Catholics in the United States. Instead, that government did all it could to sow enmities overnight upon foreign soil. It is a tribute to us that we still are able to distinguish between the Mexican government's persecution of the Church and the Mexican government's fight against American control.

Mexico's domestic economic policies needed the friendship of the Church and seemed on the point of

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attaining it when the persecution opened. The struggle against the landlessness of the people had passed into a phase which deserved the sympathy of Catholics both here and in Mexico. Some time ago, and even now to a small extent, the Mexican drive against absentee landlords had been inspired by the memory of old village communes, and it had been permeated with violence and confiscation. Catholics both in Mexico and here held back. Much as they wanted the Mexican people to come into the possession of land, much as they fought a system of landlordism that had wrecked the country and enslaved the people, they opposed violence and confiscation, and they rejected the theory many Mexican agrarians held: that the farm land of the country should be turned over to the villages.

But this Mexican land program had definitely changed a short time before the persecution was launched upon the Church. The Constitution of Mexico had itself given little aid to the agrarian communists in practice or in theory. The army was becoming an army and no longer a mob. Agrarian uprisings could be dealt with. Peace had descended upon the country. The land communists had been met and defeated in political battle by the Mexican Federation of Labor, which has a large agrarian membership and a program that looks to private ownership of land. The government was speeding up land distribution. A new agrarian law had been passed to enforce the agrarian articles of the constitution. Compensation was becoming regularized.

The Mexican provisions for land distribution are neither adequate nor unmistakably just in all their parts. But at any rate, the old days when violence, confiscation, and village communism held the centre of the stage had passed, and this much was a real title to the friendship of those who realize the importance of farm ownership and reject a social system based on tenantry and hired hands. Mexican Catholics and American Catholics are of this number. Not only is a system of farm ownership a part of the social teachings of the Church, but the evils of absentee landlordism still live in the memory of the one people and the experience of the other. Yet at this moment when the agrarian movement was showing itself worthy of friendship, a persecution of the Church began.

The same story is true of the city labor movement. The Mexican Federation of Labor had defeated the red unions and had fallen out with communist Russia. Its own program, though headed by a class struggle preamble, was not Socialist. It was securing partial enforcement of the able labor code of the Mexican constitution. It had raised wages. It was giving up the violent tactics of its youth. Its leader was preaching an industrial armistice and, as cabinet official, was calling meetings of employers' associations and the union to reach amicable agreements.

Its political alias, the Labor Party, was ensuring the representation in the government necessary to protect the labor laws and government conciliation and arbitration. All in all, here was a labor union that, with all its mistakes and the wrongs done by its followers, could not be rejected utterly but, instead, was very worthy of friendship and assistance. It could rightly appeal for friendship among Catholics in Mexico and friendship among Catholics in the United States. Yet it threw this friendship away. Its leader, as cabinet minister, after trying to stop the persecution when it first began, went along with it. Subsequently, the annual convention of the organization attacked the Church and backed the persecution.

Still the Catholic leaders in Mexico, at the very height of the persecution, remain clear-eyed. They realize the bad history of the land and labor movements, but they know that there has been a gradual and definite change. They are glad of this and they speak a good word of their very persecutors.

Surveying this scene, one hopes that somehow the government will give up its persecution and that the land and labor movements of Mexico and the organizations of the Church there will work hand in hand for the happiness, freedom, and justice of the Mexican people.

To solve its land and labor problems and to wipe out its subjection to foreigners, Mexico needs internal peace, the union of her forces, and plenty of friends abroad. The persecution, because it has sown distrust and suspicion, has endangered it all. Especially in the land and labor movements is there difficulty, since, being internal problems, they are the more influenced by domestic suspicion and distrust. Now that these movements have so changed that they deserve the solidly sympathetic, however critical, friendship of Catholics, the persecution has put up a barrier that is enormously difficult to surmount. If the persecution were to stop, probably coincidently with it would come a union of forces that would guarantee the success of the struggle of the people against landlordism, national subjection, and industrial capitalism.

Witness

When I behold in labored fields
An ox strain at its yoke,
I do not laugh as others laugh
Who are a thoughtless folk;

And when I meet in narrow streets
An ass that blocks my path,
I always stop to let it by
Though others speak in wrath.

Yet, they are beasts and I am man!—
Their brothers I recall
Who warmed a lowly Infant in
A barren, frigid stall.

EMILE KESSLER.

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PEACE WITH MEXICO

By WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS

THERE are certain well-defined and proper rules of conduct between nations and between the men who represent those nations in public office, even as there are between private individuals. Neglect of these or violation leads inevitably to discord and may even lead ultimately to hostility and violence. If nineteen centuries of Christianity, if the last twelve years of the world's history, indelibly impressed upon our individual memories, have taught us anything, they have taught us that violence is the last possible resource, and that violence in the formulation of public opinion, no matter how important the subject, is a grave matter to be avoided if we are to conserve anything of a civilization based upon Christianity. Such conservation, one must assume, is what we are all striving for in one way or another, both in foreign and domestic politics.

According to Pope Leo XIII, who has been fairly explicit in his public exposition of the relative domains of Church and state, "each is supreme in its own sphere," which does not mean that it is not wholly proper to present to the government (meaning for our present purposes, the executive power of the state) the views, well considered and well expressed, of any number of citizens upon matters affecting spiritual things pertaining primarily to the domain of the Church. It does mean, however, that it is not the business of the state to take upon itself decisions in spiritual matters, and one may deduce therefrom that for a state to intervene with a neighbor state which has taken a wrong attitude toward spiritual matters within its own domestic boundaries is an improper act, and though different in degree, is of the same kind as the wrong act which called forth the act of intervention.

These remarks are obviously directed to the present situation in Mexico and to the various forms of arraignment of our government and of our public officials in some portions of our Catholic press and even from the pulpit. They have a direct bearing upon comment on "the slowness of our government to protect religious rights imperiled in other countries (not within its jurisdiction) where it is so prompt to protect American material interests in jeopardy." The simple difference is, of course, that the material interests of American citizens are properly of the jurisdiction of the state and that spiritual rights are not. Protection of the citizen's material interests by the state does follow the citizen into territory not under the jurisdiction of the state of which he is a citizen, but even so the exercise of that protection has its limitations. Outside of violation by a foreign state of the material rights of a citizen of the United States, our government must move with utmost caution, for at very best it stands upon a dangerous borderland.

As a practical matter, the present situation in Mexico may be viewed from three angles of immediate interest to American Catholics: first, the right of Catholic Americans to teach religion in schools in Mexico or any other country in which the government does not want them; second, the treatment accorded Catholic American citizens if called to account in a foreign country for violation of a local and domestic law; third, the broad question of the rights of Mexicans in spiritual matters as against their own government. With the third it is safe to posit that our government has nothing whatever to do. On that ground our government has no right whatever to interfere with any other government. In the matter of the second, our government has gone as far in protection as it had a right to go, and that it did before the present agitation began. Out of the experience of a lifetime of diplomatic service the writer may add that he has never known the government of the United States to fail in such protection, and that he as representative of this government has not infrequently seen a point stretched in this regard beyond the strict proprieties.

Coming back to the first point—the right of Catholic Americans to teach religion in schools in a country of which the government does not want them—there is, plainly, no such civic right. The right that exists is purely a spiritual right and is no other than the right and duty of the apostolic missionary. The missionary's right to the protection of the state of which he is a citizen is limited to that of any other citizen, and pertains only to the material side, life, liberty, and property, and, in a country possessing courts approximating our own, the right to a fair trial and humane treatment. The American nation is, however, a deeply religious nation, and, as has been said above, the point has sometimes been stretched beyond our government's strict rights.

With particular reference to our southern neighbors, conditions in Mexico, for Mexicans as well as for us on this side of the border, are peculiarly difficult. Difficult in themselves, they are still further complicated by a hundred years of not too easily defensible American encroachment and by a policy of bluster. Suspicion of our motives and of our honesty engendered thereby have not made easy the efforts of more recent years to establish a better spirit on both sides.

At the very moment when it is becoming obvious that we as well as Mexico must change our ways if we are ever to live as civilized neighbors should, it

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would be deplorable in the highest degree should the Catholics of the United States place themselves in the position of hampering the crystallization of a reasonable policy by seizing upon this method of bluster and personal invective wherewith trouble-making politicians of a past era have ever neutralized the best efforts of diplomacy.

The result can only be: added difficulties for Mexican Catholics and for American religious in Mexico; unnecessary and undesirable irritation at home against the Catholic body; and complete nullification of the influence that American Catholic thought should carry.

If, in the United States, there is a Catholic attitude toward the troubles of our neighbors, it should surely be a helpful attitude; helpful to them in securing a right adjustment of their domestic difficulties, helpful to our own government in reaching a reasonable basis of understanding; for Catholic citizenship has a definite meaning. If there is as yet no such Catholic opinion, it is legitimate and desirable to develop it. It is even a duty, incumbent upon those who know, to develop it, but coöperatively, not as the opinion of an isolated group; to develop it as a matter of basic principle to which the sober majority of citizens may agree; to which they must agree by the sheer force of logic.

Logic is never driven home by violence; nor, in this case, will a logical end be achieved, as a practical matter, by neglect of existing and generally recognized rules of conduct which are neither illogical in themselves nor in any degree contrary to faith and morals. If at this juncture it is seriously the intention of Catholics to take part in building up better relations between Mexico and the United States, relations which must be built upon an enlightened public policy here as well as upon better domestic conditions in Mexico, it is vitally necessary in advance to study carefully the history of Mexico, not omitting the essential history of the Church in Mexico, and equally the history of the last hundred years of public (and private) relations between the United States and Mexico.

No one who has not made these special studies is able to pass judgment upon conditions there today.

BAITING THE DUCE

By HARVEY WICKHAM

AMERICANS, so many of whom no longer believe in a personal devil, seem, nevertheless, unable to enjoy existence without some villain in the piece. Lenin is dead. The Kaiser, with his grey hair, is beginning to look hopelessly benevolent. But let no one despair, give up his ringside seat and go home to his radio. Ladies and gentlemen, we have with us tonight—Benito Mussolini. Loud hisses, some that sound like axes being ground—others, the mere exhalation of innocent air. Everybody is happy. The play may go on.

At first sight, the Italian Premier would seem to be about the worst candidate for the vacant rôle of Satan who could possibly be offered to the American public. He is our national fetish, the self-made man, of poor but honest parents. Was not his father a blacksmith? "My life," he has truly said, "is an open book, in which anybody can read the words 'study,' 'poverty,' and 'combat.'" Here are all the elements of a "success story" for any magazine. Yet a large section of the press and public, not only in the United States but in all countries other than Italy, habitually speak of Mussolini as if he were at least Beelzebub if not Lucifer himself.

Now a man may be known by the enemies he makes no less than by the company he keeps. So let us enquire a little into this murmurous disapprobation. We may be able to uncover some enlightening facts.

First of all, it must be remembered that this is an age of propaganda. Public opinion is no longer inarticulate, and what would once have been the silent resentment of the interested few now finds itself a voice, and the voice an echo. And though it may be necessary to spend large sums in organization when it comes to boosting, the average citizen is willing to furnish breath gratis when the chantey's refrain is the easy and catchy "Blow the man down."

I can sympathize perfectly with many of the special correspondents responsible for the sort of item which begins its life as a cablegram. I can understand their chagrin when a government forbids them to dispatch precisely those articles which the editor at home is, in the journalistic phrase, "howling his head off" to receive. If deported, as some of these gentlemen have been, they naturally—from the safe vantage of Paris—make the cables smoke with the news of their outrage. Besides, where a foreign country is concerned, criticism makes a much better "story" than does praise. No doubt Mussolini, himself a newspaper man as well as a novelist and a poet, fathoms the psychology of the situation to the bottom. And yet he continues upon occasion to suppress newspapers and to deport newspaper men. Why?

Simply because he has no choice. A building once constructed may defy a great deal of wind and weather, but it is impossible to build in the midst of a storm without taking some steps toward the erection of temporary shelter. What people seem to forget is that Italy has been passing through a revolution, that in her case storm and stress are more than

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metaphors. We talk a great deal about free speech and an untrammeled press; but how much of either did we tolerate not so long ago when we were at war? And even in times of peace was there ever a government which allowed itself to be assailed without stint?

As to the suppressed newspapers of Italy, they were, like most newspapers upon the continent of Europe, not so much newspapers as party organs—mouthpieces of those petty factions, which, united in nothing else, had joined in a policy that brought parliamentary government to a standstill and the Italian nation face to face with a dilemma—one horn being anarchy and the other Moscow—the very factions, in short, that Mussolini, bent upon leading the way back to solid ground, had come to wipe out. He could, in the eyes of these factionists, do nothing right. In their attacks they used every weapon at hand, including calumny. To them, the Dictator was malum in se. If he had let them go on he would have been less dictator than fool.

One of the disgruntled scribes—an American correspondent caught in the general clean-up—has attained to such prominence as to merit special mention. Mr. James Murphy seems to be the present holder of the megaphone in the international anti-Mussolini sightseeing bus. I know nothing against Mr. Murphy personally. He is a brilliant and, I dare say, conscientious journalist—according to his lights. Though at present domiciled along the Seine, he has the advantage of a first-hand acquaintance with his material. Yet I am bold enough to suggest that his light has become as darkness—for I also have a first-hand knowledge of this same material. As highly percented in my Americanism as is he, I have lived in Europe almost continuously since the summer of 1914. I knew Italy before the famous march on Rome—I have known it since. It is my present home, where I live, move, have my being, and keep house. The Pincio where Il Duce takes his morning horseback ride is visible from my window as I write. I am, you see, in the very midst of that "tyranny" which excites Mr. Murphy so much. Yet when I read his burning paragraphs I have to pinch myself to make certain that I am awake.

He says, for instance, that "the people of Rome are so taxed that life is fast becoming impossible for the middle and working classes"; and declares that he knows of "families in Rome that are trying to live on one meal a day." He must have smiled himself when he sent off that one—or possibly he made his observation during Lent. But perhaps I don't understand the word "meal." If a sfilatino (long loaf of bread) split lengthwise so as to admit of a pound or so of salcicca, salami, coppa (various forms of sausage and chopped meat) washed down with half a fiasco, more or less, of red wine—if this does not constitute a meal, then it is true enough that many Italians eat but one meal a day—for breakfast does not amount to much. But as I think of the average Italiano (and, alas, Italiana) and of the figures they present to the naked eye, I tremble to think what would be the spectacle were the "tyrant" to let them eat more and oftener. Some of the upper classes do manage somehow to wriggle into the limits of the French silhouette—but the rank and file!

When it comes to matters of larger scope, the words of these propagandists are no less amazing. Count Volpi is no real financier, but a mere "tool of the bankers" (once again to quote Mr. Murphy as the best spokesman of his class.) "It was the banking plutocracy," he says, "that originally backed the whole Fascist show." And he warns us that the day of reckoning is coming—that the people will have to pay the piper. But the bankers are going to escape. In short, he imagines a country brought to ruin, and the financial interests growing fat in consequence. That is the sort of an economist Mr. Murphy is.

"The press is muzzled and foreign journalists are watched," we are again told. And for what reason this muzzling and watching, do you suppose? Why, this: "By such means, and by the expenditure of huge sums for propaganda abroad, the Fascists think they will be able to stave off the day when their real economic and financial position may become known to foreign bankers and foreign industrialists."

Do you understand? Foreign (that is, American and English) bankers are being deceived because they are not permitted to read such despatches as would reach them through the press were correspondents with the Duce-baiting complex not compelled to do their heavy work from Paris. According to this, Count Volpi must have used all the eloquence of which a capitalists' tool is capable trying to convince Washington on the occasion of the recent Italo-American debt negotiations that Italy was rich, fairly rolling in money, and capable of paying her debt in full.

When the anti-Mussolini ragtime is played upon such a dignified instrument as, say, the Atlantic Monthly (the January issue) it keeps to a high level of blues, but when it peals from more radical sources, such as The Nation, it becomes genuine jazz. I remember one article in The Nation which even warns its readers that some of the American $20,000,000 loan to Italy is being used in hydro-electric construction. True enough—and obviously, simply horrible. It must be that public electrocutions are being planned, and upon an enormous scale. The people of Sardinia, of Calabria, Apulia, and Basilicata around the artificial lakes of the Sila plateau, where most of the new plants are being established, would better beware. Now this is a joke, and I admit that it is not very funny. It is, in fact, rather sad—like the text on which it is a comment.

This brings us to a deeper source of the opposition to Mussolini. The radicals object to him on principle. Therefore, though he is avowedly making

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an omelette, he must not break any eggs—or heads. It was different, with these people, when the name most in everyone's mouth was Lenin. Lenin was in Russia; and in Russia for many years now it has been, in the opinion of those who see the world through a glass darkly tinted red, simply impossible for authority to do wrong. When thousands fell, it was because they stood in the way of progress. When patriarchs of the Orthodox Church were put on trial and sentenced to death, it served them right. There was being built up in Russia, you see, a dictatorship of the proletariat—and save for Mussolini and his black shirts it might have extended even unto the Eternal City on the Tiber.

So I think it might be well if those who oppose the Duce and take part in his baiting would pause and take note of what company they are keeping. It is a somewhat mixed company, I must confess, and possessing no one common denominator. For example, apart from believers in government by Soviet and their incongruous bedfellows of the extreme right, of whom more anon, there are the Free and Accepted Masons. The Royal Academy of Italy organized last January for the promotion of art, science, and literature, occupies a palace on Piazza Navona, in Rome, which was formerly a Masonic temple. Incidentally, it may be remarked that the brand of Mason thus unhoused is slightly contraband in the Masonic world—but it is easily to be understood that they who have crossed the hot sands, or guide their conduct by means of square and compass, will not do much to swell the song in praise of Mussolini which, in spite of all, is beginning to rise.

Not to make invidious comparisons, neither will members of the Order of Mafia, upon whose trail the Duce has set himself. Neither will those Italians whom the new régime has converted into voluntary but bitter political refugees—or those who have lived so long abroad as to be out of touch with the domestic happenings of the last seven years. Some of these expatriates are in danger of deportation for violation of the immigration laws, and they have informed the American public that they are "certain to meet death" if forced back to Italian soil. This must have sounded a tragic note—to newspaper readers ignorant of the fact that in Italy the death penalty is unknown. Or are we expected to believe that the threatened death is to take the form of assassination—wholesale hewings down in the streets? Here is farce, pure and simple. The first Fascio di Combattimento was founded on March 23, 1914, and considering the completeness of the evolution from chaos to order which has taken place since, surprisingly few have been hewn down in the streets or anywhere else. Not enough to furnish casualties for an ordinary skirmish—though what has been going on is war.

What a difference it makes—the words one uses to describe events. Call a government a government, and its necessary acts of suppression are so many instances of the operation of law and justice, inevitable under any régime. Call a government a tyranny, and every member of the opposition who dies or suffers loss, even in a street row, is a martyr. Mussolini's government has legalized itself by every means known to man, not excepting a general election and recognition by the established monarchy under which it operates. Aside from that, it has been for seven years a de facto government. But this makes no difference to the Duce's baiters. They refused to hitch their wagons to a star which they thought was going to fall. And it does not fall. There's the rub.

But let us listen now to the extreme rights, 100 percent Nordic. An American tourist said to me a few weeks ago: "This Duce that I hear so much about—I suppose he is a strong man. But I'd hate to see him in the White House. We don't like strong men out our way. We're a republic."

Here is one of the sad consequences of war. The non-combatant must, in war-time, be stirred by slogans. And after the war is over the slogan remains, no longer useful in preserving a needed morale but carrying an emotional charge which is a positive hindrance to a return to rational thinking. Europe is finding this out at Geneva. It is one thing to get peoples to hate; but quite another to get them suddenly to stop hating. So our tendency to look upon anything not strictly democratic as a menace to ourselves and to the world, though gradually subsiding, is still at a slightly feverish elevation.

Men like Mr. Isaac Marcosson, of the editorial staff of the Saturday Evening Post, are beginning to see this plainly enough. In a recent speech delivered at Milan he is quoted as saying: "Mussolini is in many respects the most remarkable personality I have ever met. He is a super-Roosevelt. If he is a dictator, then Europe needs more of the same type. If France, for example, had a fiscal Mussolini she would not be in the financial turmoil that now besets her." And he adds a word of praise for Italy's financial condition, declaring her to be the one country that seems to have learned anything from the world war.

Much might here be said about Italy's economic recovery. Her exports, worth 19,000 million lire in 1924, jumped to 26,000 million in 1926, and are still expanding. Imports have increased from 14,000 million to 18,000 million in the same period. Electrical power consumption is now more than 180 kilowatt hours annually per capita, instead of 70, as it was a short time ago. But I wish rather to draw attention to the change which has come over the country in ways less easily defined and having more to do with the spirit. One has to live here to realize the full magnitude of what has happened. One needs to see a troop of black shirts, young, enthusiastic, fit, marching beneath a consecrated banner to the tune of Youth, Youth, Springtime of Beauty, to know how absurd it

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is to call them vulgar cut-throats. The expression of men's faces, the air with which they go about their ordinary tasks, though supremely significant, cannot be reduced to statistics.

Mussolini has described himself as a realizzatore—a fact-facer—and one of the facts which he has faced is the fact that Italy is a Catholic country. He is not only the son of the old, anti-clerical blacksmith of Romanga, but the son of a pious mother as well. True enough, he began his active life as a Socialist. But before that he had spent some time as a pupil of the College of Silesian Friars at Faenza. Once he was caught reading Machiavelli. Later, when reproached for it, he said: "Yes, but I have changed my book." The world, I think, owes much to the Duce's rare ability to change his book. He is no theorist, prone to project an original error in a straight line which runs into the ground; but a realizzatore, capable of going forward. "No one can serve Fascismo without being a good Catholic," he has said.

So last year the procession of Corpus Christi marched through the streets of Rome quite as in the old days. And this year—I cite the fact merely as a straw to indicate the direction of the wind—the Italian government, aided by the city of Assisi, contributed 3,000,000 lire and a plot of ground for the erection of a new monastery for the Franciscans, to take the place of the one long since wrested from them and now occupied by the College of the Prince of Naples adjoining the church at Assisi where the bones of Saint Francis lie.

When Mussolini first came into power, I heard it said that he was going to tear the cross from Saint Peter's. He has, instead, restored it to the Colosseum. The formal celebration of this event was planned for Good Friday, but a preliminary to the permanent restoration was enacted March 25, when the grim old amphitheatre of the martyrs was illuminated, "a fiaccole e a bengala," while a temporary cross was drawn to the top of the walls above Caesar's balcony, and the Societa Polifonica Romana, under the direction of Monsignor Raffaele Casimiri, of San Giovanni in Laterano, sang to the music of Palestrina: "Laudate Dominum, quia benignus est."

I think I can see that we have come quite a long way since 1871, when the original Colosseum cross was taken down—a way which does not, it seems to me, lead in the direction of destruction.

Postscript, April 7: Today, for the second time since I have made my home in Rome, an attempt has been made on Mussolini's life. And this time the would-be assassin is an English-speaking foreigner. No comment is necessary. The tragic results likely to follow in the wake of irresponsible criticism in public print are sufficiently obvious. Sooner or later, under such circumstances, some unbalanced brain, filled with the idea that ignorant or calculated misstatements are the simple truth, is certain to attempt to rid the world of a supposed monster. Many of the world's most useful citizens have perished in this way. Rome once more is ringing with thanksgiving over the Duce's escape. Te Deum laudamus. But it might very easily have been Dies Irae.

WHEN MINUIT CAME TO MANHATTAN

By FRANCIS J. WAHLEN

THE tercentenaries of New Amsterdam and the purchase of Manhattan Island from the Indians are to be celebrated this year in New York City from May 1 to July 4. The actual date of the arrival of Peter Minuit, sent out from Amsterdam in Holland by the directors of the chartered West India Company, his landing on Manhattan, and subsequent inauguration as the first governor of New Amsterdam, is generally accepted as having been May 4, 1626. Authorities may differ about the meaning of the word "settlement," or about the exact year when such a settlement was made on Manhattan Island. But none differs with the eminent Dutch historian, Mr. Dingman Versteeg, in his contention that not the Belgians, nor the Walloons, nor the French Huguenots, but rather the Dutch deserve the credit for the founding of New Netherland and the chartered city of New Amsterdam.

This phase of the historic question is worth emphasizing because repeated attempts have been made of late to divide this credit among other nationalities. The argument has always been that some of the early settlers of New Netherland were originally subjects of countries outside the Netherlands. At the time of their application to the West India Company to be sent to New Netherland, these settlers were, however, as Mr. Versteeg has pointed out, subjects of the Netherlands, to which country they had emigrated, like the Pilgrim Fathers, from countries where they were hampered in the free exercise of their civil and religious rights—countries which they gladly forsook for the moral liberal surroundings of the seventeenth-century Netherlands. It may be well to set forth some of the main conclusions of the researches of Mr. Versteeg, as a Dutch contribution toward the settlement of this important question.

After the discovery of the Hudson River by the crew of the Halve Maen, in 1609, a company of Amsterdam merchants, encouraged by the reports of Hendrick Hudson and his Dutch mate, dispatched, in

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1610, a ship to trade with the natives for the furs of which the reports had contained such glowing accounts, and samples of which, conveyed across the sea by the Halve Maen, had aroused the mercantile instinct of the Dutch. The captain of this new vessel was probably Hendrick Christiaensen, noted as one of the earliest continuous visitors to these shores, and the first trades-director, a few years later, for the New Netherland Company. As it was necessary to spend considerable time in collecting the furs, a number of buying-agents were permanently stationed in the country, so that the ships would not have to wait too long for a full cargo. In their sloops and yachts these agents visited the chief fur-producing sections along the Hudson, provided with seawan and various articles of European manufacture with which to barter for the furs.

For the preservation of the collected furs and of the European merchandise, as well as for the accommodation of the agents when not on trading trips, suitable buildings had to be erected at some central point. It is therefore very probable that warehouses had been built on Manhattan for the southern part of the country, and at the head of the Hudson River long before the construction of the more substantial forts. Before entering upon his regular trips to these parts, Christiaensen, upon returning home with a valuable cargo from the West Indies, had intended visiting Manhattan; but the wreck of a Monnickendam ship in this neighborhood restrained him, and he decided not to risk his ship and cargo. After his return to Amsterdam, he entered into a partnership with the famous Adriaan Block, engaging Captain Ryser and his ship for a voyage to the Hudson River fur country.

Nothing definite is known about the success of this venture other than that Christiaensen took back with him two young Indians, Orson and Valentine, "sons of the principal sachem there." Having been returned to this country, Orson, a few years later, was the cause of Christiaensen's death. After this one voyage the partnership between Block and Christiaensen was dissolved. Thereupon, both entered the employ of a company of Amsterdam merchants trading with this country. Captain Block was given command of the Tyger, and Christiaensen was put in charge of the Fortuyn. While Christiaensen probably was visiting the South River (Delaware) country, Block had entered the Hudson River. Here, at Manhattan, in the fall of 1613, his ship was burned. Nowise discouraged, Block immediately set to work building another vessel, a yacht of sixteen tons burden, which he named the Onrust (Unrest) and which was finished in the spring of 1614.

While the Dutchmen with Block were busy constructing the yacht, Manhattan received a visit from Captain Samuel Argall, of Virginia, who found here "four houses built, and a pretended Dutch governor," whom he summoned to submit to English authority. The "pretended Dutch governor," doubtless none other than the chief agent for the fur trade, signed a certificate of submission, which was forwarded to Virginia and there recorded in the archives. However, the early Virginian archives were destroyed by fire, so this document is no longer in existence. Nor did this temporary submission have any effect on the Dutch occupancy. Argall departed, a new manager of the fur trade arrived later, and the whole matter was forgotten. But the incident shows that Manhattan was permanently settled by the Dutch at least as early as 1613. The fact that there may not have been any white women here does not detract from the permanency of the settlement. Seven years later, in 1620, Captain Thomas Dermer, another Virginian, visited the island and had a conference with its Dutch traders "about the state of that coast."

It is quite probable that very soon after engaging in the fur trade along the Hudson River, these various merchants, for the purpose of freighting ships, had entered into a copartnership—forestalling thus by two centuries John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. They had, in 1613, equipped for common account at least five ships, four of which were Amsterdam vessels. The other ship, the Fortune, of which the renowned Cornelis Jacobsen May was captain, belonged to three members from the old Dutch city of Hoorn. On August 18, 1616, these merchants were styled "directors of New Netherland" in a resolution by the states-general of the Dutch Republic, while two years earlier, on October 11, 1614, in another resolution of the states-general, the name "New Netherland" was first applied to the Hudson River country and adjacent territory north and south of it. The various firms, united for the New Netherland trade, were referred to in the same document as "the United Company of Merchants."

It was on October 11, 1614, that this company received a charter, granting them the exclusive trade for three years on "certain new lands situated in America, between New France and Virginia, the sea coasts whereof lie between forty and forty-five degrees of latitude and now called New Netherland." Two years later, on account of further discoveries, the bounds were extended two degrees further south; while four years afterward, on August 29, 1620, New Netherland's boundaries, in a petition to "leave the trade in peltries free," were extended from "the thirty-fourth to about the fiftieth degree"—more than three times larger a territory than in 1614.

Immediately after its official incorporation, the New Netherland Company, in 1614, had a substantial fort built at the head of the Hudson near the mouth of the Mohawk, which territory produced the most abundant and best furs. This fort was called Fort Nassau, and preceded Fort Orange, in the same region, by about nine years. That no mention was made

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at the time of the erection of a fort on Manhattan Island shows that the warehouse here was strong and in good condition. It probably stood and served until 1626, when Kryn Ferdericks, a military engineer, began the erection of a new fort about which the Reverend Jonas Michaelius, Dutch Reformed minister, in his letter of August 8, 1628, says: "They build here a new forteresse, not so much as a protection against attacks by the savages, which, with God's help, we need not fear much from now on, as against ennemies from the outside." This new fort was not finished until 1635.

Meanwhile, Captain Cornelis Hendricks, of Monnickendam and the Onrust, had not been idle. After Block, in that ship, had finished exploring Long Island Sound and neighboring coasts, and had put Hendricks in command of the Onrust, the latter set sail for the South River (Delaware) where, besides making important discoveries and "whilst trading in sables, furs, robes, and other skins," he also ransomed from the Minquaes, or Ogehage, tribe of Indians, three agents in the employ of the New Netherland Company—giving for them "kettles, beads, and merchandise!" One of these rescued was probably Kleyn Claasje, or Claas Martensen Van Roosevelt, the ancestor of the Roosevelt family.

After the expiration of the charter of the New Netherland Company in 1618, the intercourse between Holland and New Netherland gradually altered. The company, though it had lost the monopoly, continued its trade and on October 4, 1618, even petitioned the states-general for "the continuance of their charter for some years longer to trade exclusively" for the furs of New Netherland. Their High Mightinesses, as the states-general then were called, took no action in regard to the petition. Nothing daunted, on February 12, 1620, the company proposed to the states-general to colonize New Netherland with the English dissenters, then living mostly at Leyden. These were the Pilgrim Fathers, who in December, 1620, founded Plymouth Colony in New England, after the states-general at The Hague had decided to decline taking any action. At about the same time two petitions had been presented, one for the extension of the monopoly of the New Netherland trade, the other to "leave the trade entirely free." The free traders, it is worthy of note, gained the day, and until 1622 the trade with New Netherland remained untrammeled.

Ever since the formation of the East India Company in 1602, voices had been raised in Holland for the erection of a West India Company, which was to accomplish in America what the East India Company was so splendidly achieving in the Orient. Willem Usselinx, a former Antwerp merchant, who after 1585 had taken up his residence in Holland, was the chief and untiring advocate of the proposed West India Company. Various causes retarded its formation until at last, on June 3, 1621, the states-general at The Hague granted it a charter. Thus established by the parliament of the Dutch Republic, the Dutch West India Company launched itself upon an expectant world, with the rival London Chartered Companies as the greatest spectators. The Dutch company became a success in many respects, though extremely adverse conditions very early hampered its advance. For one thing, the opponents of the West India Company in its chartered territory could much more easily concentrate their power, and were much more resolved to oust it, than they were in regard to the East India Company, whose territories were situated more outside the general field of concentrated ambitions. This was the reason, after many minor adversities, of the loss to Holland of northern Brazil in 1654, and of New Netherland in 1664. The Dutch Republic and England were frequently at war during the seventeenth century, and the Anglo-Dutch war from 1651 to 1653 indirectly contributed to the loss of Brazil.

The charter to the West India Company, of June, 1621, was not comprehensive enough, and two years later, on June 21, 1623, the states-general finally amplified the original, though the provisional directors had not waited for this to enter upon the business of the company. They had completed arrangements with Walloon families, soon to be conveyed to Manhattan. A considerable number of the Walloon population of the Spanish Netherlands, which now are called Belgium, had found a refuge in the seven provinces of the Dutch Republic, like fugitives from many other lands; as, for instance, the Dissenters, pilgrims from England, and the Jews from Spain and Portugal. A number of these Walloons were there when the West India Company was looking about for settlers for their New Netherland colony beyond Manhattan. It therefore saved the company the trouble and expense of recruiting at large their needed colonists. The company would have been obliged to engage Dutch or other settlers, if the Walloon refugees had not been available at the time. These Walloon refugees were certainly not colonists especially selected for the specific purpose of colonizing New Netherland, or Manhattan.

In the spring of 1623 the equipment of "a ship with colonists" was ready. Wassenaer, who is the only historian of the earliest agricultural settlement of Manhattan and New Netherland, writing during February, 1624, says: "For the purpose of building up a colony within this nation a ship was fitted out under a commission from the West India Company, and freighted with families. . . . The description thereof shall be presented in the beginning of the seventh volume, as this part cannot contain it."

Then, writing under date of April, 1624, Wassenaer resumes the narrative, giving the full story of the expedition as follows: "The West India Com-

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pany, being chartered to navigate these rivers, did not neglect to do so, but equipped in the spring [of 1623] a vessel of 130 lasts called the Nieu Nederlandt, whereof Cornelis Jacobsen May, of Hoorn [in North Holland] was skipper, with a company of thirty families, mostly Walloons, to plant a colony there. They sailed in the beginning of March and directing their course by the Canary Islands, steered toward the Wild Coast [Guiana] and gained the west wind, which luckily took them in the beginning of May into the river called first Rio de Montagnes, now the River Mauritius [North River, or Hudson River]. . . . This being done, the ship sailed up to the Maykans [Mohicans] forty-four leagues, and they built and completed a fort named Orange, with four bastions. They forthwith put the spade in the ground and began to plant, and before the yacht Maeckereel sailed, the grain was nearly as high as a man."

The success of the colonization being assured, the directors of the company in Amsterdam, in the spring of 1625, sent over, through the agency of Peter Evertsen Hulft, horses and cattle, as well as a large number of hogs and sheep. A year later, in November, 1626, after the arrival of the director-general, Peter Minuit, we find Wassenaer, having received fuller information, continues the history of the settlement, and at the same time gives further particulars about the cattle: "In our preceding discourse mention was made of New Netherland and its colony, planted by the West India Company, situated in Virginia on the river called by the French, Montaigne, and by us, Mauritius [the Hudson River] and that some families were sent thither out of Holland, now increased to 200 souls; and afterward some ships, one with horses, the other with cows, and the third with hay; two months afterward a fly boat was equipped carrying sheep, hogs, wagons, ploughs, and all other implements of husbandry."

This positively fixes the agricultural founding of New Amsterdam in 1625, and prior to the political founding, through the arrival of the first director-general, Peter Minuit. It is an important point because, after the agricultural settlement, the cattle needed attendants and it is probable that all of the forty-five people, who crossed with the cattle ships, remained permanently settled on Manhattan. The following year all the other agricultural settlements, throughout New Netherland, were broken up for a time (until the system of groups-colonizing, under Patroons) and the farming population removed to Manhattan, while only a small company of fur traders, twenty-six in all, remained at Fort Orange. Other points along the Hudson River and its branches were covered by trading yachts, operating from Manhattan. This first concentration of colonists brought Manhattan's population, at the beginning of Peter Minuit's governorship, up to about two hundred and seventy, nearly all men, except for the women among the families which came with the Eendracht in 1623, and the New Netherland in 1624.

All of the colonists, farmers as well as traders and mere adventurers, Walloons as well as Dutch, during the first six or seven years of the agricultural settlement were in the employ of the West India Company. During those early years there were no independent settlers, or "freemen," as they were called. In regard to preaching in French, which has been given as a proof of a Huguenot majority within the population of New Amsterdam, the preacher, the Reverend Michaelius, previously quoted, in his letter of August 11, 1628, stated that "a portion of the Walloons are going back to the Fatherland, either because their years here are expired, or because some are not very serviceable to the company." From other sources we know that these Walloons, who did not learn to speak Dutch, as some of their younger ones, could not adapt themselves to their cosmopolitan environment, where, only twenty-five years later, the chronicles speak of "no less than eighteen nationalities, divided into almost an equal number of religious sects."

It was not until 1630, after the issuing of the "privileges and exemptions," that independent colonists, as well as the Patroons, settled and took up land for cultivating purposes. When the company, after 1639, had relinquished its monopoly of the fur trade and other commerce, the free settlers—farmers, mechanics, industrial workers, fur traders, merchants, boatmen, and a host of others, flocked into the country and rendered its colonization a lasting success, long before New Amsterdam became New York City.

Olim Meminisse

Do you remember the Pan-pipes skirling
  Desperate music on Walworth height,
When the beat of our feet set the brown leaves whirling,
  Whirling like elves in the wan starlight
  Till the little shy beasts of the wood took fright?

Do you remember the poplar, lance-like
  Piercing the breast of the summer moon?
Ah, the beat of our feet as they measured the dance, like
  Pixies bewitched of the piper's tune
  Blithely we footed his rigadoon!

Do you remember that moon's adorning
  Amethyst skies of a night like wine,
The slow-setting stars and the smell of morning,
  Fragrance of dew and the scent of pine—
  And the hint of the dawn on the far sky-line?

Now sere, untrodden brown leaves are lying
  That the beat of our feet in the dance made fly,
Walworth is mute—save the night-wind's sighing:
  Now, where the rout of the dance was high,
  Little shy beasts of the wood pass by.

ROBERT MASKELL PATTERSON.

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THE PLAY

A PLEA FOR OPERETTA

NEW YORK today is the centre of the theatrical and operatic world. In the variety of plays and operas presented, in their staging, even to a considerable degree in their acting, and certainly in their singing, we no longer need fear comparison with the capitals of Europe. What wealth can bring wealth has brought us—in every respect but one. Yet this lack is a serious one.

We have no theatre devoted to operetta or to those more intimate forms of opera for which the vast spaces of the Metropolitan Opera House prove so inhospitable a home. A Mozart opera at the Metropolitan resembles a tiny though precious jewel set in an enormous hoop of gold—the brilliancy is there but it is largely hidden. Such works, too, as Pelleas et Melisande, Les Contes d'Hoffman, and even Carmen lose half their charm in a theatre suited to the Wagnerian music dramas and the great spectacles of Verdi, and as for the masterpieces of the lighter forms of the lyric theatre, for the operettas of Offenbach and Lecocq and Suppé, and let us not be ashamed to add the names of Gilbert and Sullivan, the Metropolitan is, of course, quite impossible. The former type of opera the Metropolitan gives us as well as it can be given in an auditorium utterly unsuited to it, but the operettas we never get at all except when commercial managers undertake some special revival, such as Winthrop Ames has so brilliantly given us with Iolanthe and the Shuberts have recently made with Pinafore.

The recent opening by the Opera Players of the Grove Street Theatre, a little playhouse in Greenwich Village, roused hopes that a permanent theatre for operetta and the more intimate forms of opera might at last be in process of formation. The idea was present and the desire, but, alas, both the choice of the initial offering and the performers of it failed to give basis for these hopes. The opera was Rutland Broughton's The Immortal Hour, which for some reason known only to the British public has had considerable success in London. All that Mr. Broughton's utterly uninspired score succeeded in doing was to strip the original poetry of the libretto of every scrap of beauty, and to leave an evening of uninterrupted boredom. The singers themselves, though one or two of them possessed excellent natural voices, were in their present state of development little better than rather promising amateurs. They did their best, but the best of a group of merely well-intentioned amateurs will never found an intimate opera house such as New York needs. It was a pity, for much intelligence had been shown in the scenery and lighting, and the theatre itself was charming. So it is that though the Grove Street Theatre is now in being we are precisely where we were before.

We need such an intimate opera house. Where now are we to get it? It would be useless to approach the commercial managers, for there is small chance of such a house proving a paying investment. The Society of American Singers, which once at the Park Theatre showed signs of vitality in its Gilbert and Sullivan revivals, is no more, and the various existing theatre groups such as the Guild and the Greenwich Village Theatre are interested chiefly in the spoken drama. There remains only our old and often belabored friend, the Metropolitan Opera Company. The Metropolitan is shortly to begin the construction of a new opera house. The auditorium of this house will be as large and possibly larger than the present one at Broadway and Thirty-ninth Street. This auditorium will then be equally as unsuited for the more intimate types of opera as the one now in use. If the Metropolitan builds but one auditorium there can be no hope of improvement. But why is it necessary to build only one? Would it not be possible to construct within the same building which is to house the golden horseshoe, a smaller theatre, seating, say, some twelve or fourteen hundred, a theatre where such operas as Don Giovanni, Così Fan Tutti, and Pelleas et Melisande could be given by the finest artists of the company, and where at other times operettas and opera bouffe could be given by a special company in conjunction, perhaps, with some of the younger and more sprightly members of the opera company proper?

Such a second theatre would have a double benefit. It would train a company of artists in the presentation of an art which is fast being lost, and it would give the younger singers of the Metropolitan an opportunity of learning practical stage technique, an opportunity which they can only obtain at present by singing in the European opera houses. It would be ridiculous to argue that a course in Offenbach or Gilbert and Sullivan would unfit a singer for Wagner or Verdi. The opposite is the case. An operetta singer has to learn to act, and it is well to remember that two of the foremost artists of the Metropolitan began in light opera. Maria Jeritza was the queen of Viennese operetta long before she sang Tosca or Elizabeth, and Edward Johnson made his début in The Waltz Dream. Neither of these singers belongs to the semaphoric school of operatic actors, and the semaphoric method is the method which four out of five of the singers who have appeared only in grand opera adopt and never unlearn. To be a successful operetta singer one must not only possess intelligence but know how to employ it, and intelligence would be a grateful addition, indeed, to the equipment of the average soprano or tenor who at present considers the alternation of a vertical with a horizontal movement of the arms the limit of operatic acting.

That the public would welcome with enthusiasm the establishment of a theatre for the more intimate forms of opera and for operetta there can be no doubt. Its small size, of course, makes impossible any enormous intake at the box office, but it would probably at least pay for itself once it was fairly started. And even if it did not it would furnish the Metropolitan with a training ground for young singers which today it badly needs.

Moreover, it would undoubtedly preserve for us an art which we can ill afford to lose, and might prove, as well, the birthplace for a strictly American school of light opera. Grand opera is to the American composer something more alien that he likes to admit. It is not in his blood because it is not in the blood of the people from which he springs. But light opera is another thing. The enthusiasm of the American public for Gilbert and Sullivan is as genuine and as vital as the enthusiasm of the Italian public for Verdi or the German for Wagner. That enthusiasm we ought to capitalize, and now that the Metropolitan is about to erect a new home for its activities is the time for it to prove that it is not a mere museum of European art and a rendezvous for the tired rich.

GRENVILLE VERNON.

(R. Dana Skinner, dramatic editor of The Commonweal, who has been ill for several weeks, will resume the conduct of this department in our next number.—The Editors.)

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COMMUNICATIONS

HOW SHALL WE REGARD MEXICO?

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—What should be the attitude of Catholic Americans toward the present situation in Mexico? Both as liberty-loving Americans and as loyal children of the Christian church they must obviously detest the illiberal and tyrannical anti-clerical legislation which is now being enforced in Mexico, and they must pray that the denial of freedom of religion and of education may come to a speedy end. At the same time, however, Catholic Americans should set a strict watch over their speech and action in respect of Mexico lest they make a very bad situation even worse. It is because some of my coreligionists in this country have not set such a watch that I have been moved to write this letter.

There are two aspects of the matter concerning which, in my opinion, an increasing number of Catholic Americans are adopting a mistaken or erroneous attitude. The first is the tendency, evidenced in ever so many of our Catholic journals —The Commonweal included—to apologize for everything which has ever been done by the hierarchy in Mexico, just as though the Mexican hierarchy were eternally endowed with infallibility and even impeccability. This tendency is bound to irritate anyone who is at all versed in Mexican history and to distract attention from the contemporary situation. To my way of thinking, it is far better to oppose the existing anti-clerical legislation on the solid ground that it is illiberal and tyrannical than on the debatable ground that Mexican revolutionaries have always been wicked and perverse and Mexican ecclesiastics always good and enlightened. It will do less harm to true history.

We Catholic Americans should face the fact that alongside of the great Christianizing and civilizing work which for centuries the Catholic Church performed in Mexico there developed grave abuses. Under the Spanish régime, the union of Church and state, the enormous accumulation of wealth, the great landed estates, tithes, and princely salaries of certain bishops, the preferment of sons of the Spanish upper classes for the highest offices in the Church, all operated in Mexico, as analogous tendencies operated in pre-revolutionary France, to identify the hierarchy with the established government, with aristocracy, with wealth, and with the army. The glories of the Church in Mexico were really to be found, toward the end of the eighteenth century, less in the archbishops and bishops, than in the poverty-stricken and devoted priests (some of whom were of Indian blood) who knew their people and labored among them. It was a distressing sign of the times that the archbishop of Mexico City then enjoyed a personal revenue of 130,000 pesos while there were pastors of Indian villages in his archdiocese whose yearly income did not exceed 125 pesos. Little wonder, then, that when the revolt against Spain broke out in Mexico, a considerable number of parish priests became the leaders of the native Mexicans, while the hierarchy, with the Inquisition, arrayed themselves on the side of Spain and reaction. What a pity! If the hierarchy had been closer to the masses they would themselves have been real leaders of a truly popular movement, and of a movement which, under the actual leadership of Fathers Hidalgo, Morelos, Torres, and dozens of other Mexican priests, was as Christian and Catholic as it was patriotic. The subsequent history of independent Mexico might have been better and happier.

Affairs are different today, and I do not wish to be understood as saying or implying that the present Catholic hierarchy in Mexico are lacking in popular sympathy or social vision. On the other hand, I do wish to protest against such whitewashing of the hierarchy of a hundred years ago and such blackening of Father Hidalgo as appeared in The Commonweal in its issue of April 21 in answer to the interesting and sensible letter of Mr. Edward T. Devine. Much the same can be said of Father Hidalgo as has been said of Father Morelos, and I commend to all readers of The Commonweal the scathing arraignment of the Spanish Inquisition in Mexico which they will find in the article on Morelos in the Catholic Encyclopedia.

Secondly, in so far as Catholic Americans assume an attitude of endeavoring to make the present welfare of the Catholic Church in Mexico a special object of solicitude on the part of the United States government, they are adopting, I believe, a most mistaken and short-sighted policy. For what will be the results? First, it will react against the Church in this country. We shall be accused, with some justice, of attempting to "play politics" as an organized body and to bend the foreign policy of the United States to the service of our international organization; besides, despite our declaration that we do not wish armed intervention in Mexico, the hullabaloo which we may succeed in raising in this country can hardly fail to give at least indirect encouragement and support to those fellow-citizens of ours who for economic, rather than for religious, reasons are already itching for American armed intervention. Again, and even more seriously, this attitude of ours will react against the Church in Mexico. In other words, unless we are careful, we shall defeat the very end we have in view. For there can be little doubt that threats from the United States will intensify greatly and prolong indefinitely the present tyrannical régime in Mexico. Those professional anti-clericals down there want nothing better than to have the issue squarely joined between Mexican patriots, steeped in anti-clericalism, on the one hand, and Mexican Catholics, backed by foreigners, on the other hand.

Catholic Americans can give strength to an American and to an international conscience, a conscience which is horrified by religious intolerance, and a conscience of which even Mexican anti-clericals stand in awe. Individual Catholics in this country, by advice and counsel, can aid their coreligionists in Mexico to organize themselves and to conduct an effective opposition. And all Catholics can unite in prayer. Beyond these acts we should not go. By no means should we make any appeal to our government. The outcome is with God and with the Mexicans.

CARLTON J. H. HAYES.

MEXICO AND LABOR

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editor:—May I attempt as briefly as I can to clarify the situation raised in your issue of April 21 by Dr. Edward T. Devine's letter and your reply thereto? According to my understanding of the latter, there is no difference of principle between your position and that of Dr. Devine. The difference pertains entirely to policy, and even there it seems to reduce itself to a question of emphasis.

You attribute to Dr. Devine the view "that the Catholic voice should always strike up a harmonious duet with liberal-

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ism." I am unable to find this thought expressed, or even implied, in Dr. Devine's letter. As I interpret him, all that he asks is: first, a recognition of the element of good in the Mexican revolutionary program; and second, that the errors committed by Mexican churchmen with regard to political and social movements in that country should be kept in mind as a partial explanation of the present religious persecution.

Let us try to be specific on both these points. Article 123 of the Mexican Constitution of 1917 contains thirty sections concerning labor and social welfare. With possibly two or three exceptions, these provisions are humane and just. Many of them bear a striking resemblance to paragraphs in the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII on the Condition of Labor. For example, Section 6 declares: "The minimum wage to be received by workmen shall be that considered sufficient, according to the conditions prevailing in the respective region of the country, to satisfy the normal needs of the life of the workman, his education and his lawful pleasures, considering him as the head of a family." Indeed, the great majority of the provisions of Article 123 constitute an industrial code which we might well desire to see embodied in our own federal and state constitutions. Any judgment upon the Constitution of 1917 which leaves out of account these and other excellent provisions, is not only incomplete and unfair, but prevents the mind from intelligently or comprehensively estimating the issues at stake in the Mexican conflict and the strength of the position occupied by the present Mexican government.

With regard to the provocation which the social and political attitudes of Mexican churchmen may have created in the past, chiefly in the somewhat distant past, for the present persecution, I have not enough knowledge to warrant a definite opinion or conclusion. Indeed, one of the most distressing features of the whole controversy is the lack of specific data on this question. Neither the friends nor the opponents of the present Mexican government bring forward anything satisfactory in the shape of specific facts. General and sweeping assertions are met by equally general and sweeping denials. Faced by this lack of specific knowledge, I can only fall back upon general experience. From books like Parker T. Moon's Labor and the Catholic Social Movement in France, we learn that more than one persecution of the Church in that country in the nineteenth century was due in part to the opposition of French churchmen to current social and political movements. Did not Pope Leo XIII feel obliged to write a letter to the French Catholics urging them to accept the republic and discontinue their support of the project to restore the monarchy? Similar situations have arisen in other countries of Europe. Something of the same kind may well have happened in Mexico.

Truth and fairness, then, suggest that we should reject what I may call the "diabolism theory" of the Mexican anti-religious persecution, as well as of similar persecutions elsewhere. That explanation is entirely too simple to fit the complex facts of any social and political disturbance or upheaval. The enemy is not wholly actuated by diabolical motives. On the other hand, the Catholic forces, being human, have not always been entirely without fault.

Of course, I realize the difficulty of keeping such facts in mind and of taking the judicial position which they suggest in a conflict such as that now in motion in Mexico. The temptation is great to consider the situation as one of warfare, and in war the enemy is counted wholly bad. There is no good in his position, nor any evil in ours. Consider our attitude toward the German people during the recent war. Natural though this sort of attitude is, even in controversies and conflicts which do not involve actual war, it is, I submit, neither wise nor just nor charitable. The condition of Europe would be vastly less deplorable today if, during the war, the Allies had taken a more judicial attitude toward the merits of the conflict. In due time an understanding, a tolerable adjustment, will be reached between Catholic interests in Mexico and the government of that country. But it will not be hastened nor improved by a method of resistance and opposition which exemplifies the "diabolism theory." Such a policy is likewise contrary to justice, and its lack of harmony with charity is obvious.

JOHN A. RYAN.

CIVIC PROMINENCE AND CATHOLICS

St. Louis, Mo.

TO the Editor:—In the closing lines of a recent communication to The Commonweal, Mr. W. F. Sands asks the brief question: "Do we [Catholics] stand out?" A negative answer must follow a glance into the Who's Who of our multi-fold national life. In the field of national politics, in judicial and diplomatic circles, in the literary and educational world, our representation is woefully small. And the causes? They are numerous and it is not my present intention to discuss all of them. I merely wish to offer for consideration three facts, which may be taken as causes—natural and potent causes—for the lack of a more generous participation in the life of our nation.

First of all, those who framed our government, gave it its language, customs, social life, and laws, and later on settled the frontiers, were, in great measure, of English, Scotch, Scotch-Irish origin. Need I declare their religious affiliations? That is a remote cause which, however, is closely allied to a second, proximate cause of non-Catholic participation in national affairs in the United States. Recent government statistics state that 51,000,000 of our fellow Americans are of English, Welsh, Scotch, and Scotch-Irish birth or descent. Allowing for a statistical exaggeration, still I think we can accept the government's figures in the main as fairly accurate. Again need we ask if there are many Catholics in this predominating group?

These facts may be offered in turn as causes why the 51,000,000 should stand out and why, partially at least, we Catholics should not stand out. What could be more natural, considering priority of occupation and present numerical predominance? Non-Catholics came in on the ground floor, ascended the stairs in course of time, and today pretty comfortably occupy the national house.

Our numbers came later and, note this especially, they come largely as strangers, while the British Isles group was, in great measure, right at home.

The third fact offered for consideration is so obvious that there is little need to expatiate on it. I refer to prejudice against Catholics; now and then organized and profit-bearing, always traditional and ancestral. While not wishing to overemphasize this phase of our national existence, still the stubborn fact remains, as the recent incident connected with the appointment of Mr. Thomas F. Woodlock, competent but Catholic, as a member of the Inter-State Commerce Commission plainly indicates.

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Undoubtedly, there are other reasons why we Catholics do not share more generously in all fields of endeavor, be they social, cultural, or political. But in fairness to ourselves, let the above patent facts be pondered over thoughtfully. They are here offered not as a sop to the apathetic, but to stay a hasty and perhaps unjust condemnation.

Time and natural increase will remedy our first-named handicap. Will time remove the ingrained bias against us? We devoutly hope so.

REV. CHARLES B. LARGAN, S.J.

THE NOBLER BEAUTIES OF MONACO

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—I have read with some surprise your editorial in The Commonweal of April 21 on the principality of Monaco. It is undoubtedly calculated to create a very false impression of the principality in the minds of those who have not had occasion to visit it in person.

The presence of a casino where public gambling is indulged in is in no sense an unusual feature of European resorts. There are, of course, many municipal casinos in France, and in a number of them the play is higher than at the casino of Monaco. Moreover, the Salles de jeu is only one feature of the casino at Monte Carlo. It has one of the most beautiful theatres in Europe, and it has been well known in the musical world as the sponsor of much that has been best in the history of modern music.

But, quite aside from the casino, "the climate, and the cathedral," there are many other institutions to attract the visitor who is interested in things other than roulette and chemin de fer.

The Oceanographic Museum is unique in the world both as to the perfection of the building itself and as to the rare and beautiful specimens which it contains. Scientists from all the capitals of Europe and America are familiar with its contents and are unstinted in their praise of the great work accomplished by the late Prince Albert I, and of his considerable contributions to science.

There is also the Museum of Anthropology, the importance of whose collection is recognized throughout Europe. The Archives du Palais contains a priceless collection of original historical documents of great scientific value, particularly relating to the history of France. The famous Hanging Gardens contain, I believe, the most complete collection of exotic plants to be found anywhere in the world, and a visit to this beautiful garden, particularly accompanied by Mr. Gastaud, Jardinier—chef de Monaco, is an experience which no student of botany will ever forget. The hospital which was founded in 1902 is recognized by physicians and philanthropists as one of the most perfect institutions of its kind in Europe.

It is, of course, quite true, that to the average American visitor the Tir au Pigeons and the Salles de jeu are more alluring than either the Oceanographic Museum or the cathedral, but the work of the late Prince Albert and his contributions to science have been recognized by practically all of the scientific societies in the United States.

PAUL FULLER, JR.

(The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications expressing individual views on all topics that are of public interest regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.—The Editors.)

BOOKS

Personalities and Reminiscences of the War, by Robert Lee Bullard. New York: Doubleday, Page and Company. $5.00.

Fix Bayonets! by John W. Thomason, Jr. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

Toward the Flame, by Hervey Allen. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.00.

Allenby of Armageddon: A Record of the Career and Campaigns of Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby, with a Preface by David Lloyd George. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $5.00.

THE issue of four war books of first importance within a few months does more than register a growing interest in a subject off which ambitious writers and dramatists were being warned only a year ago. It gives us an opportunity to compare and contrast the views and judgments upon war which four men, differing widely in temperament, in functions and character, feel called upon to pronounce seven years after the struggle has entered into history.

One of them is a distinguished American general whose reputation was already made in his own country before the entry of the United States into the world war tested it, in the eyes of the world, literally with fire. Another is a soldier by profession and temperament with a keen relish for his calling, an authentic appetite for the rough and tumble of hand-to-hand fighting, and, by a happy accident, a draftsman of talent. The third is that interesting figure, the philosopher and student-in-arms. General Allenby's story falls somewhat outside the category of personal experience. It is written by his military secretary, a frank hero-worshipper, and with a hero worthy of worship. To General Allenby fell the happy destiny of being withdrawn, at a critical moment, from the terrible anonymity of the western front and put in charge of a spectacular and sweeping campaign which reproduced the flame and color of crusades in the twentieth century and which might have broken the power of Islam once and for all had not the jealousies and rivalries of the "great" powers put it back in its place as the secular menace to Europe. Its record is worth considering with the others. For Allenby's war is the war of which young soldiers dream, and so long as it is possible, just so long will it continue to throw its glamor over the drab mechanics of gas, and barbed wire and killing at long distance, and go on making "ambition virtue."

General Bullard's reminiscences are probably the frankest war record we have ever had from an officer of his rank. In numerous quotations of a day-to-day diary kept during the war, he confesses his disillusionments, his expectations that were not realized—apprehensions that happily came to nought. Where he made a mistake as to men or events he is quite honest in admitting it. He has that thing, rare among soldiers, an open mind. When conclusions come his way he makes them without caring much what prejudices they collide with. Like Napoleon he hates (one feels it) a poor soldier or a scamped job, but he hates them because he believes that discipline and character lie at the rock-bottom of the profession of arms, or, to put it another way that war is the acid test of manhood.

Where General Bullard's story is particularly valuable is in the evidence it contains as to the state of mind that had descended upon France after two and a half years of war and devastation. Arriving as he did with the first contingent of

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troops, he had unique opportunity to form a judgment. After the first thrill of deliverance at a development that put victory within reach, it is plain that a sort of dismay settled upon the French staff at the deliberation of the American effort. In his diary, under date of September 30, the General is forced to note that "our French allies will become, indeed have already become, critical. I hear some question already among the weak-hearted as to why the United States puts its soldiers in the railroad shops and leaves the Frenchmen on the fighting line." And a few months later the shrewd leader comments thus on the tendency observed to break up large American units: "The French staff and general officers certainly never for a long time believed, and even finally unwillingly accepted, that the American staff was capable of directing the operation of its troops." It is interesting to speculate what would have happened had those responsible yielded to what there is not the slightest doubt was a general, if unexpressed wish on the part of the Allies, and been content to furnish man-power, leaving direction and material in French and British hands. It is arguable (the writer has heard it argued) that the war would have been over sooner. It is also arguable that it would have dragged on indefinitely.

For what the American arrival upon the scene did, first and foremost, was to break up a stalemate that had descended upon the fighting front—a dead-lock that only a dead lift could loosen. In what I think is the most powerful and exact phrase ever used, General Bullard describes the famous line from the Channel to the Alps as something that "writhed like a wounded snake for three years." Over and over again, filled with admiration as he is for the courage and devotion of his French allies, the American general notes an absence of the traditional "élan" born of hope and confidence which wins victories.

"Miles and miles of them passed in column [it is the French army going up to meet the worst of all the German drives, that of March, 1918] steadily marching toward battle, deliberate, self-possessed, quietly smoking, silently gazing at me and other passers. No excitement, no worry or despair on their faces, only calm, a look not of determination but of resignation to go on and face whatever lay before them. I cannot think that they believed that they could stem the awful tide of German victory; they seemed only to feel that they could face it."

One of the brusquest comments of the frank and fighting commander of the Third Corps is made upon the press despatch which allowed the world to think that at the battle of Belleau Wood "there was nothing but Marines and, of course, dead Germans, their victims and theirs alone." Fix Bayonets, by Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., is a record of the part played in it by the men who are "soldiers and sailors too," the famous "leathernecks" whose everyday field of operations is anywhere a landing party can be put ashore. No one will grudge the Marine captain his preoccupation with the deeds of his own corps, the more so as he pays generous tribute to the other units composing the Second (or U. S. Regular) Division, nor his preference, in a tight corner, for the soldier by profession. His story is a record, amazing in its stark reality, of the soldier in close, hand-to-hand, "ding-dong" fighting, when staff arrangements have been disarranged by the necessity to first kill men anxious, above all, to kill you. Just a few will give some idea of Captain Thomason's quality:

"Sweating, hot and angry with a cold, bleak anger, the Marines worked forward. They were there, and the Germans, and there was nothing else in the clanging world. . . . They got in, cursing and stabbing. Meanwhile, to the left a little group of men lay in the wheat under the very muzzle of a gun that clipped the stalks around their ears. A man can stand just so much of that. . . . One fellow seized the spitting muzzle and upended it on the gunner. . . . Bayonets flashed in and a rifle-butt rose and fell. . . . The air snapped and crackled all around. The sergeant beside the lieutenant stopped, looked at him with a frozen, foolish smile, and crumpled into a heap of old clothes. Something took the kneecap off the lieutenant's right knee and his leg buckled under him. He noticed, as he fell sideways, that all his men were tumbling over like duck-pins; there was one fellow that spun around twice, and went over backward with his arms up. Then the wheat shut him in and he heard cries and a moaning."

Captain Thomason's is a curiously objective view of war, a positive tour-de-force of impressionism, which we owe to the happy accident that, like Baron Gros during the Napoleonic campaigns, a professional soldier with a keen relish for his calling was "doubled" (as the French would say) with a very efficient black-and-white artist. For the doubts and questionings which arise in the mind of a philosopher on active service we turn to the very remarkable record by Mr. Hervey Allen of his experiences as a platoon leader in the Twenty-eighth or "Iron" Division during the fighting around Château-Thierry and the drive for the Argonne. Toward the Flame, I think, is destined to take its place in the category of Le Feu and Mensch im Krieg as one of the most intimate and vital studies of war psychology that has ever been penned. Unlike many of the "emotional reporters" of the war, Mr. Allen has not to draw upon imagination to understand how the fighting man feels at the moment that the stroke falls for which the long months of preparation, fleets of transports, long convoys of commissariat and ordnance, staff conferences, and councils of war were only the preparation. He knows (for he has been a part of it) that the real business without which all these things are waste, is done by sick, half-starved, and footsore men, from whom everything has fallen away except the iron ration of endurance and sacrifice. He knows just how it feels to lie for hours exposed to shell-fire and can tell you bluntly that it is "the worst thing in the world." He can describe, from first-hand experience, the strange automatism that descends upon a marching column, just able to put one aching leg before another—literally stumbling along the road to death, and with what an icy chill at the heart the deeds that make history are done. One passage, almost Greek in its spectral beauty, cries for quotation. The young lieutenant is musing by the side of his men, asleep in their glistening slickers under the pouring rain, as the sky is paling in the East and the guns are beginning their prelude for another bloody day. "They were sleeping like the dead, literally. The faces of a sleeping army are wonderful. All the lines are relaxed, all the pettinesses, weaknesses, vices, stand out. The weak jaws and chins fall open and droop, the lines on both sides of the nose grow deeper—only on a few, mostly the very young, there comes a calm and a sweetness, a light grace in the sleeping attitude that justifies the worship of youth."

Beside such intimate and moving chronicles, Mr. Raymond Savage's Allenby of Armageddon stacks up as only one military history the more. It is written in the style consecrated by Napier and Kinglake. The figure of the victor in the war's one spectacular campaign and late governor of Egypt stands out as true to type, a little glum and aloof, dependable to a hair, with strange and disarming little idiosyncracies, such as

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his love of children, and visits to them in hospitals. During the crisis of preparation for the Somme attack: "The general went out, purchased some pastries, and went down for a little chat by the bedside of his protégeé. He returned to headquarters at the exact moment that the guns were to lift, ready to deal with each report as it was telephoned back and to give orders accordingly." "The incident," comments his staff-captain, "aptly illustrates the cool detachment of Allenby's mind." Suppose we leave it at that!

HENRY LONGAN STUART.

The Letters of Bret Harte, assembled and edited by Geoffrey Bret Harte. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

THE latter years of Bret Harte have always been enveloped, in American eyes, in a kind of shadow. His youth was meteoric. His fame blazed up in the West; and when he left California his eastward journey was reported in the press throughout the country like the tour of some visiting potentate. He remained in the East for half a dozen years, lecturing and trying to gain some solid foothold; then he went abroad, never to return. He continued to write to the last day of his death, but his fame grew dimmer and dimmer. He was even pursued by malignant newspaper articles, describing him as a "played-out" and "broken-down hack" and alleging, as he says in one of his letters, "that I was a ruined spendthrift living in England 'on money I borrowed from my English friends.'"

His fame grew dim and malodorous. He had quarreled with all his friends at home; and one notes, as very significant, that, aside from his family, only three letters in this whole voluminous collection are addressed to American correspondents. Two are business letters to Mr. McClure, and the third was written to Stedman, a brief and bitter line. "Be thankful," he says, referring to one of his poems, "that I have found time to copy the enclosed." But the record of his life, as the letters disclose it, is that of a man who fought a long, hard fight and who simply never found his "pied à terre." On the day of his death, from cancer of the throat, he was still at his desk, grinding out his "600 words." Embittered and disappointed as a man, he never lacked courage as a writer.

His letters have been generally described as tragic; and tragic they are, wherever the blame may lie. "You will perhaps smile and remember," he writes to his wife, apropos of his dislike of Germany, whither he had gone as consul, "how you used to accuse me of making the like charges against every place where I have lived." He had quickly fallen out with California; he had fallen out as quickly with New York. Unable to make a living by writing and lecturing, he had applied for a consular post. But Krefeld in Germany suited him no better.

He made a very efficient consul. The exportation of Krefeld silk to America "was increased," his grandson says, "by over two hundred thousand dollars quarterly, or eight hundred thousand dollars a year under his administration, and this by reason of the great simplification introduced by him into the previously existing methods regarding invoices, etc." But "Germany is no place for me," he says. It made him "nervous and sick," and so did Glasgow, when he arranged to be transferred. "I cannot get acclimated," he says of the latter. "I cannot help feeling that I am living by gaslight in a damp cellar with an occasional whiff from a drain, from a coal-heap, from a mouldy potato-bin, and from dirty wash-tubs. That is Glasgow for me, and that is all it has ever been since I have been here."

At fifty he lost his post. Thereafter he was reduced to living by his literary work alone. "I have no 'home' in this country," he wrote in 1882, "beyond a hotel in Glasgow or the house of a friend in London." Toward the end of his life he had gathered a circle about him; he had some semblance of a dwelling-place in England. But he had felt himself an exile from the outset. He was "heartsick" for America. "I am longing," he says, "for the freshness, the newness, the youthfulness of my own country." The only household in which for years he seems to have been an intimate was that of the Belgian Van de Veldes. "Perhaps there is a kind of sympathy," he remarks, "in the fact that they are intensely un-English, and Madame as a girl thirty years ago visited America with her father, and loved it." He saw much of Froude and the half-dozen other "nice people" to whom he once refers, who "have always been very polite to me"; but he never really liked or approved of England. "Too d——d comfortable," he says of the upper classes; "no ambition—no endeavor—but of the most pitiable, trivial kind. . . . Ridiculous show, vulgar ostentation. . . . What can one think of Americans who worship this sort of thing?"

He is always contrasting the "effeteness" of the Europeans with the fresh, frank freedom of his own countrymen. He is always on the point of returning home, for a long visit at least. Then he feels behind him the resentment of America: "Everything tells me how utterly alien I and my writings have become in my own country . . . I think—indeed, I fear—that, if I returned, as if to earn my bread among them once more, the value of my work would be lessened because the publishers would think I was dependent upon them." And again: "I am paid in America less than half what I get here, and while I am there I should lose all that I am able to get here." And so he remained to the end.

He remained at a serious price. "I sometimes wonder," he says, "what kind of work I am doing. I never see anybody whose opinion I value; I never hear any criticism. I grind out the old tunes on the old organ and gather up the coppers, but I never know whether my audience behind the window blinds are wishing me to 'move on' or not." He was out of touch with any world he knew. His experiences in California, in the gold country at first and later as messenger of the Wells, Fargo Express, were his only inspiration. He tried to draw upon other sources, the English character and American life in general, but California remained his stock-in-trade, a California that grew dim and confused in his mind, a memory unrenewed. Having lost his natural terrain, he never again succeeded in touching the earth.

It goes without saying that these letters record many alleviating adventures. His friendship with Froude was warmly satisfactory. Of George Eliot he gives a pleasant picture: "I have seldom seen a grander face. I have read somewhere that she looked like a horse—a great mistake, as, although her face is long and narrow, it is only as Dante's was. It expresses elevation of thought, kindness, power, and humor. Mrs. Lewes's eyes are grey and sympathetic, but neither large nor beautiful. Her face lights up when she smiles and shows her large white teeth, and all thought of heaviness vanishes. She reminds you continually of a man—a bright, gentle, lovable, philosophical man—without being a bit masculine. . . . She said many fine things to me about my work, and asked me to come again to see her, which was a better compliment, as she

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has since Lewes's death received no one." And there are many amusing notes about his hobbies, his visits to country-houses, his brief vacations.

Perhaps the tragic impression one gets of the book is unduly emphasized because most of the letters were written to his wife. He had left her behind with his family in America and saw her only once in the remaining twenty-five years. We hear overmuch, in consequence, of his money difficulties, overmuch, perhaps, of his ailments, overmuch of his loneliness and his ill-success, for these letters home are undoubtedly tinged by a need to justify his own existence. But the note that recurs, the note that remains in one's mind, is that of a man who had never found his natural place in the world.

VAN WYCK BROOKS.

The Art Theatre, by Sheldon Cheney. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $3.50.

WHETHER you call them little theatres, or experimental theatres, or art theatres, the chief difference between the kind of theatre which Mr. Cheney discusses in his book and the standardized Broadway type of theatre lies in the purpose for which they are founded and run. The commercial theatre, as its name indicates, furnishes its commodity, entertainment, in the hope of an immediate and large financial return. The art theatre produces plays which its management believes worth while without any particular expectation of financial profit, and for the sake of doing a worthwhile thing well.

The last ten years have witnessed an enormous growth in the art theatre movement throughout the United States, with the highly interesting result that commercial managers have been brought to a sudden realization that certain types of plays and certain methods of production which they had despised as being highbrow contain many lively and strenuous germs of popular success. Many of the finest plays, and much of the finest work in production, which we now see in the commercial theatre, have been deliberately taken over from the art theatres. So it is well, in reading a book like Mr. Cheney's, to remember that he is not discussing an abstract or highbrow theory of the theatre, but is setting before us a romantic story of the growth and increasing vitality and power of a new idea.

This book is a very concise and interesting guide to anyone who wishes to heighten his enjoyment of the average theatrical performance by coming in closer touch with the currents and changes in the theatrical world throughout the last decade. Quite logically, Mr. Cheney starts out with a general discussion of present conditions in the American theatre, showing how the need for the small independent theatres was forced by the conditions of commercial monopoly existing under the older régime. He then compares with our own conditions the European system and gives a brief outline of the start of the art theatre idea in France, Germany, and Russia. Then comes the advent of the art theatre in America with a detailed account of such new, but already well-known institutions as the Theatre Guild, the Actors' Guild, the Provincetown and Greenwich Village Players, the Neighborhood Playhouse, and certain of the better-known community theatres of the Middle-West and the Pacific Coast.

From then on the book devotes itself more particularly to a discussion of the various problems faced by the small independent theatre, beginning with the need of sound business organization, the finding of an artist-director, the finding of actors willing to undergo immediate sacrifices for the sake of this new idea, the choice of suitable plays, the matter of scenic design and stage settings at sufficiently low cost, the organization of community support, different types of building and equipment, and a brief suggestion or prophecy of future development.

The accomplishments of the art theatres in this country speak so eloquently of their artistic and even practical commercial value, that the outline which Mr. Cheney gives of what they have done is perhaps sufficient comment on this phase of their work. But the quite general knowledge that theatres of this type frequently have to appeal to special groups for continued support of their work, and the impression which this conveys of careless management, give a very special and practical importance to Mr. Cheney's chapter on organization and management. It has been, I understand, the experience of theatres of this type that if they can demonstrate the wise expenditure of available funds from season to season, they have little or no difficulty in finding groups of people willing to make up a slight annual deficit in much the same way as the annual deficits of operas or many of the great symphony orchestras have been met. From a wealth of first-hand experience, Mr. Cheney makes clear in just which directions we should look for this sound business management of art theatres, thus giving us a standard by which we can distinguish the failures occurring through business inefficiency from those which arise through lack of popular support of some of the more advanced and unusual types of plays.

It is almost inevitable when presenting new forms of drama from time to time, that these art theatres should find themselves several years in advance of the growth of popular taste. They are only repeating in drama the experiences of great musicians, or of such a composer as Wagner in the early days of the music drama. It follows that certain plays fail to attract large enough audiences completely to cover the cost of production.

The deficit in such cases must simply be charged off to missionary work in the art of the theatre. Fortunately, there always have been and always will be people of sufficient means and sufficient artistic enlightenment to sustain deficits of this description. And there is no reason for charging failure against an art theatre whose insufficient revenues can be traced solely to a bold missionary spirit. But there have been other art theatres whose management of the funds made available to them in the early season has been unwise and even reckless. I particularly recommend this chapter of Mr. Cheney's book to all those lovers of the theatre who are interested in supporting the art theatre movement, and who are seeking some guide to help them in the wise use of the money they are willing to contribute for this cause.

Mr. Cheney's association with the art theatres in this country has been so intimate and has extended from such an early period in their development, that he is in many respects one of the best qualified men to write with authority and that quality of interest which springs from direct personal devotion to a work. His book is at once a record of dramatic accomplishment, an outline of present conditions and problems, and an important guide to future developments. Moreover its clear and forceful style makes it a valuable contribution to any library of the theatre.

R. DANA SKINNER.

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No More Parades, by Ford Madox Ford. New York: Albert and Charles Boni. $2.50.

I HAVE read too many publishers' blurbs to be easily impressed by them; but I must confess to having felt a little overawed by the number and forthrightness of the opinions expressed by the reviewers and marshaled by Messrs. Boni upon the cover of this book. That is, I was a little overawed until I read the book. Then, at several points during the reading of it, I was all but overpowered by boredom. But at least I did manage to read it, which is more than I can say of its predecessor, Some Do Not.

After this I need hardly say that I do not consider No More Parades to be "as great as anything produced in English during the past twenty-five years," or Mr. Ford (né Hueffer) to be the astounding genius that the New York literary coteries have decided, for some reason, that he is.

Yet in spite of Ford's use of glittering cynicism and affectation to conceal his incurable sentimentality (a common trick in these days) in spite of his book being a rather tedious nightmare, I will admit that No More Parades is worth reading. Certainly not for its factitious eroticism. Even the abominable Sylvia found that dull—for she cried out in Some Do Not: "Isn't there something thrilling about chastity?" though she got, in neither book, any very great number of thrills. No More Parades is worth reading for one thing, which, after all, occupies about four-fifths of it: its account of a base-camp in the war.

Anyone who reads that account must wonder how the war was won. For if it was the settled conviction of the army that the war was being fought for the glory of politicians, and impeded by newspaper proprietors and other laymen powerful enough to impose their fads upon an incompetent and venal government, Mr. Ford merely tells us about that conviction while he actually exhibits the general incompetence of the officers who made the complaint. And the exhibition is all the more effective because it is not labeled with the denunciatory phrases of the man who is trying to make out a case, but comes in at all times casually as if it were taken for granted.

But the characters of the book from Lord Campion to Tietjens, its central figure, are all fools. There are evidently readers who have found them interesting: speaking for myself I must confess to having no concern about their histories or their destinies.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

Meditations from Holy Scripture, prepared and issued by The Cenacle of Saint Regis. New York. $2.00.

NINETEEN lessons or meditations on the History of The Most Wonderful Promise Ever Made, for the use of mothers and teachers of Christian Doctrine is an admirable adaptation of true pedagogical principles to be applied to that most important subject, the formation and instruction of the Christian child. The authors have been concerned with such topics as "the soul, the angels, our first parents, God the Creator, and the Holy Trinity." The standing of the religious of the Cenacle and the approbation of the Cardinal Archbishop of New York are evidences of the zeal and ability that have gone to the creation of this really valuable handbook of catechetics which should prove a necessary vade-mecum in every religious grammar and high school, in every parish Sunday school, and in every Catholic home.

BRIEFER MENTION

Lost Hills, by Anne Ryan. New York: The New Door. $1.50.

THIS little book of Impressions and Portraits reveals in the author a natural gift of vision and character quite without the attitude of the professional poet or the aroma of the studio. The Impressions are evidently derived directly from nature, expressed in a harmonious Celtic style and animated by a lofty sense of the beauty of creation. There is religion here also, not obviously approached but rather sensed in the quality of the appreciation. The Portraits are stronger, and more interesting in character than in merely aesthetical quality. Old age and renunciations are favorite subjects of Miss Ryan. The final lines of her poem, From a Spinster, reveal the general scope of The Lost Hills:

> "So cloistered, locked away my real self lies,
> In days grown ordered and austere.
> The peace of age,
> The freedom from worn-edged domination,
> The quiet dusk dream—
> Are so safely mine.
> And now, in a moment, I'll go in to supper, frugal, solitary—
> Contentment in its accustomed groove;
> While before me, through the darkening halls of this old house,
> The little breeze will carry
> All the salt, the tang, the freshness of the sea!"

There is a soft, feminine quality about the poems of Lost Hills which sometimes slips into a misty lack of thought that suddenly startles the reader to question the intent of the poet. A slightly firmer handling of her subjects would place Anne Ryan in an enviable position among the singers of today. There is reason to expect that she will yet acquire it.

The Life of Saint Francis de Sales, by Harold Burton. New York: P. J. Kenedy Sons. Volume 1, $6.00.

THIS work, of which the first volume alone appears at present, is an adaptation of the great work of the Abbé Hamon. It will receive a warm welcome for up to now we have had to our hand only the small and rather dull life by the late Mr. Ornsby, and that has been long out of print. The recent action of the Holy Father in declaring the Saint the patron of Catholic journalists and all writers on behalf of the Church, has called the attention of the non-Catholic world to a man who has never lacked clients within the Church. He is pre-eminently the saint of common sense and many have found guidance in his Letters though they were written long ago to people who have been years in their graves. The first volume does not bring us much further than his coming into contact with that great woman whom we know of today as Saint Jane Frances de Chantal, the founder of the Visitation Order if, indeed, we should not assign Saint Francis to that position. Thus we have the account of his heroic struggle for the Faith against the Genevan Calvinists, that dour and dreadful herd; of the reëstablishment of the Faith in the Chablais; and of his early episcopate. Those who read this volume, and they should be many, will look with anxiety for the second which is to complete the biography and which will form the most satisfactory account of the Saint yet written.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"Oh, goody, goody," cried Tittivillus from his post at the window, "here comes Dr. Angelicus in a cream and rose taxi."

"Let me see," exclaimed Miss Brynmarian, rushing to the window. "The new spring shades in taxis are most intriguing. But I don't believe I have yet seen a cream and rose one. Why, it just matches my new spring costume! Hereafter, I shall take none other. One should be, even in the choice of taxis, aesthetic in one's taste."

Enter Dr. Angelicus. "I am at last converted," he remarked as he hung up his hat.

"Why, Doctor, haven't you always been a church-goer?" asked Miss Brynmarian in surprise.

"You misunderstand me," said Dr. Angelicus. "I said nothing about religion. I merely said I had been converted."

"To what?" asked Britannicus. "Vitallic breathing, the Charleston, Yogi philosophy, the Automat, silk pyjamas, patent breakfast food, golf, whiskers, flappers, or what?"

"My dear Britannicus. You do me wrong to suspect me of conversion to such. Have I lost all my dignity? Look in more erudite fields." And the Doctor dropped into his chair.

"You're not thinking of entering the Dante contest, are you?" asked Miss Brynmarian suspiciously. "Six writers have dropped in here today to borrow what books we have on the poet, and our shelves are sadly depleted. I am in favor of making every contestant for the essay prize wear a duplicate of the laurel wreath that always crowns Dante's head in the pictures. It would limit the number of contestants to only real Dante enthusiasts, and now that spring is here they would run no danger of taking cold in leaving off their usual felts and derbies. The younger ones could wear their wreaths cocked rakishly over one eye—the older ones, more sedately—and our long-haired poets would have the advantage of being able to use hair-pins to keep the laurel on straight."

"What are you trying to do? Put the Dante contestants in training for perspective haloes?" asked Britannicus.

"You forget that I am talking about literary men," said Miss Brynmarian with a cold glance.

"Ahem—we have drifted somewhat away from the subject, haven't we?" suggested Britannicus mildly. "Just what are you converted to, Doctor?"

"To the League of Nations," announced the Doctor.

The others were astonished. This was indeed a change of heart for Dr. Angelicus, who had always referred to the news of that august body as "Geneva gibberish."

"What has won you over to the League?" asked Britannicus. "The smoothness with which it created the Iraq mandate?"

"No," replied Angelicus. "The taxi drivers. As I entered the library today," he continued, "I heard some comment about the corporal beauty of the taxi which had driven me here. What saddened me, but did not surprise me, was that I heard nothing about the most important feature of that taxi—indeed, of any taxi—the chauffeur. I have long made a serious study of taxi drivers, and have come to the conclusion that they are quite our most worth-while class. I will heartily sponsor any organization which will be their champion—even the League of Nations!"

"But is the League really working on taxi drivers' problems?" asked Miss Brynmarian. "I thought they were still busy trying to crack the Brazil nut."

"Of no importance at all, my child, in comparison to the

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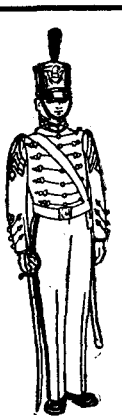

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welfare of our cab Jehus. The driver of the cream and rose taxi which you so admired, told me," he continued, "that chauffeurs, recently meeting in international conference at Rotterdam, adopted a resolution on a series of questions affecting their profession, and have submitted it to the League. The improvements they demand would affect light and instrumental traffic signals in use at night; traffic regulation affecting parking; warning signals at grade crossings and crossroads; foundation of state and municipal schools for chauffeurs; establishment of a minimum age limit and minimum qualifications for the profession of chauffeur; arrangement of driver's seat on motor vehicles; adoption of wind shields and other means of protection against the weather. My driver was sure that the League would act favorably on the resolution."

"But why are you so in sympathy with taxi drivers?"

"They take my life in their hands every day," replied Angelicus, "and thus far they have preserved it (though I must admit they have given me one or two narrow squeaks). Moreover, I find them, on the long journey to and from my home, delightful companions. For instance, I have one driver who can sing or whistle any aria from any opera ever composed. Last evening he musically drove me home to the strains of Le Coq d'Or, supplemented with Carmen, Lohengrin, and The Barber of Seville. It was, I assure you, as I lolled back in comfort in the depths of his pale blue cab, a delightful journey."

"But surely it is not necessarily in the general nature of taxi drivers to be musical?" inquired Miss Brynmarian.

"No," said Angelicus. "But I find that when they lack the musical quality they possess some other of equal value. They are, for instance, frequently quite spiritual. Take the chauffeur of that Nile green cab I sometimes use. He drove me to church last Sunday. When we arrived, I discovered that I had only a large bill, and just change enough to pay him his fare without the customary tip I always give him. I explained the unfortunate circumstance to him, whereupon he smiled, and nodding toward the church said: 'That's all right, sir. I would much rather have you say a prayer for me in there than give me a tip.'"

"What is his telephone number?" asked Miss Brynmarian. "I shall need a taxi tonight."

"Ah," said Dr. Angelicus. "I am afraid he won't have time. You see I have him engaged permanently for every evening. But you must also hear about my intellectual driver. He is a college graduate, and well versed in the classics. He is the one I select to take me on long drives in the country, where I can enjoy at once a feast of fresh air and intellectual stimulus. He can discourse for hours at a time on political economy, science, literature, and the arts."

"Doesn't he ever run out of gas?" asked Miss Brynmarian, as she rose to leave.

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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